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DISQUISITIONS

ON

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL

THEOLOGY,

BY THE LATE
WILLIAM THOMAS WISHART,
OF SAINT JOHN, N. B.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following Treatises were written by the Author a few months previous to his death, at the request of his friends, and were intended for public delivery.

These friends of the Author, and of the doctrines preached by him, believed that they only needed to be known to be gladly received by many, who, in utter ignorance of them, and under the dominion of old prejudices and superstition, supposed them to be heretical and dangerous. They wished, that on an occasion, not considered sacred, the public should have an opportunity to hear and judge for themselves the system of interpretation, and the doctrines derived from it, recommended by Mr. WISHART, in his weekly expositions of Scripture. They hoped that in a large community, there were many just enough to listen, before they condemned, or acquiesced in the decision of interested parties, themselves ignorant of the subject, and only aware that every change must be to their disadvantage, whose interests are based on things as they are. They thought that there were many who would pay their own reason the compliment of believing that they could listen uncontaminated to a few lectures,

supposing them to advocate erroneous doctrine, while they were themselves, in opinion and feeling, the very product of an opposite system, supposed by them to be right.

It would be paying too high a compliment to the new system, before knowing what it is, to consider it so much stronger than the old, that it could undo, in six evenings, all that the other had done in a lifetime, with every influence to favour its operation.

Where the knowledge of truth is the only object desired, and the Word of God the only rule used by which to try what is truth, that must be a weak intellect which cannot trust itself to listen to the investigation of a subject. Indeed it would seem that weakness is not the worst fault of such a mind. It must be conscious of some error, which it is unwilling to see rectified; some prejudice which it is resolved not to surrender, and it must at least suspect of its creed that it cannot come to the light, lest its deeds should be reproved.

But the desired opportunity was not permitted. This, with many other hopes, have passed away, with the earthly life of the writer of these Essays, and they are now presented to the world uncorrected and unrevised, as he left them; not prepared for publication,—the first rapid composition, not even corrected for oral delivery.

There may be errors in style or grammar, which his own eye would have detected in reading, and which he would have altered; but the principles announced, as far as they proceed, give an accurate expression of what he believed, and—together with what he before published—if understood, faithfully received, and honestly acted upon, will bring about that happy

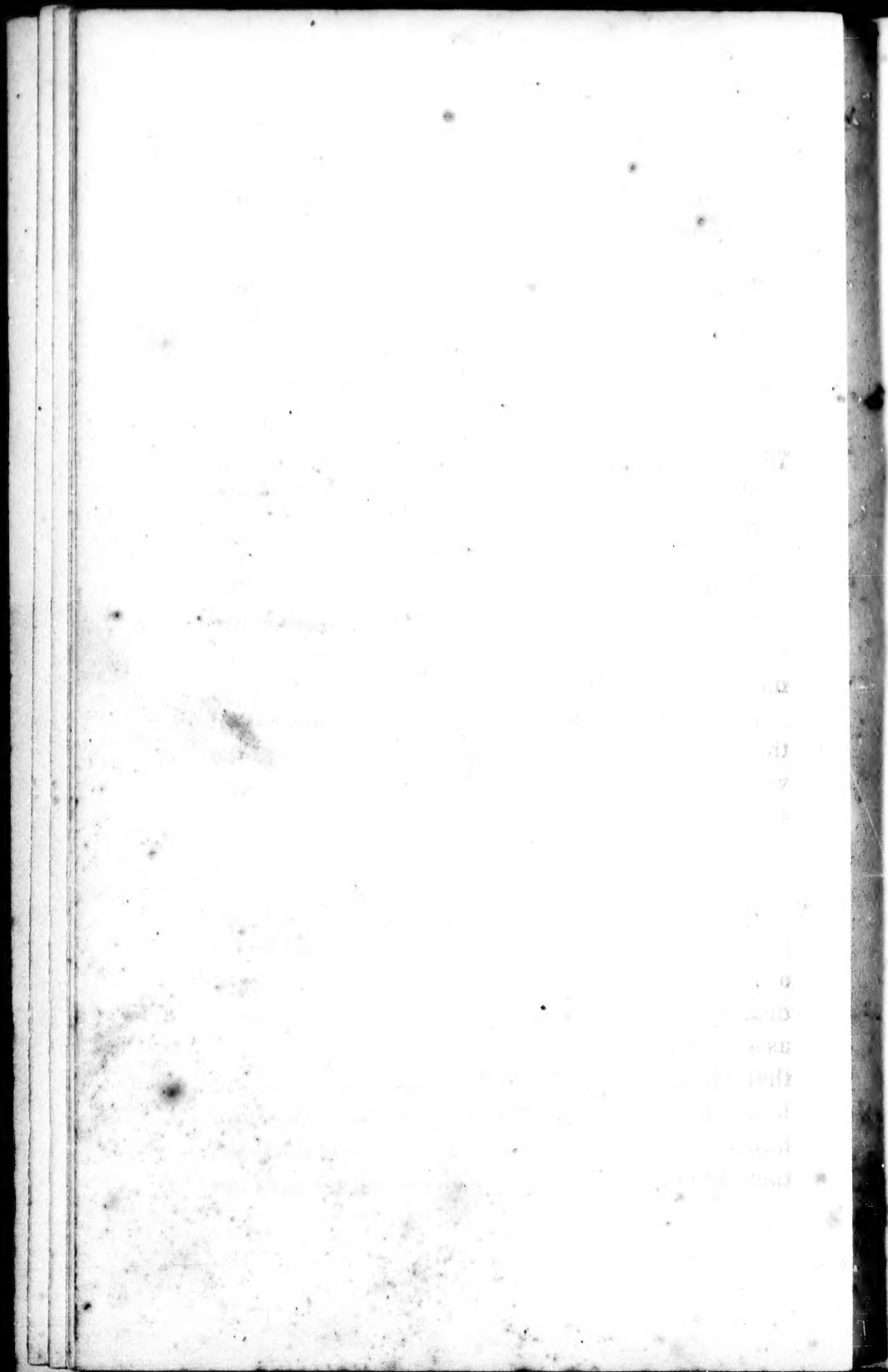
consummation which he so much longed to see; but, like Moses, was only permitted to view in the distance.

On their own merits they must stand or fall, and according to their inherent vitality, they must die or spring into active life, and produce that vast progeny of faith and joy which the church has so long expected, and which has been so long deferred.

Such as they are, they are given to the world without an apology, and without an editor.

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LECTURE I.

**THAT THE NATIONAL ISRAEL IS IN ALL RESPECTS THE
TYPE OF THE SPIRITUAL ISRAEL, OR CHURCH OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT.**

To prove this in such a manner as that persons of average abilities would be left without excuse if they did not accept the proof, would lead to more than one important result.

(1.) It would arise out of the argument that there are undiscovered truths still locked up in the word of God. That a volume, after it has employed so many minds, and been investigated during so long a course of ages, is still in advance of the human race, this would be another reason why we should believe in its inspiration, and consider it as vindicating its professed character of a message from the Creator to the creature. To deal with it on an opposite principle; to regard it as a system whose truths are exhausted—an error that has been tacitly committed by all sects, would be to consider that Revelation was run out before human history was unrolled, and when as yet there are but few symptoms of the influence of the

word of Truth upon the hearts of men. On the contrary, to find in it new lines of momentous facts, is to show that the author of the book is at least deeper than many generations of mankind,—more profound than has been hitherto supposed, because able to construct a plan that many human beings have not been competent fully to unroll.

(2.) The Bible pretends to be a communication from heaven to earth. But according to our hypothesis, one proof that it affords of this fact, is the very significant one, that its professed author has had the power and skill to make the transactions of a people, one part of whose history is removed from us by four thousand years, and the most contiguous part of which is separated from us by more than two thousand years; that he has been able to render so distant, and it may be added, so vast a circumstance, the germ and type of another event also very great, and to all appearance so different.

Thus, he who declares that he has shut up in Scripture a record of his sovereign purpose to save men through Jesus Christ his son, would be seen giving as one proof of his willingness and adequacy, that he has inscribed this design on the story of our species, that he has caused a people during twenty centuries to pass through a various and complicated evolution, in such wondrous subordination to the fate of another race, that the two lines coincide at every point, and that all time is requisite in order to exhaust the stupendous parallel.

God says—this is my book; I composed it by means of holy men whom I commissioned to register every circumstance in the words that they have used; one evidence that I furnish in confirmation of this is, that the Jewish nation, whose history is recorded in the first part of the volume, is so arranged that while its career is as actual as that of any other people on the earth, it is also a hieroglyphic of the affairs of that moral race for whose benefit the Christian religion was devised.

(3.) The supposition which we advance, fitly demonstrated, will supply a support for the conclusion, how sublime must be the truth that is in Jesus, since it required a whole people to play that pantomime which is its shadow! How vast must be the events whose preamble has been so voluminous, whose harbingers have been so many and great! How important must that holy people appear in the sight of the Most High, when he has employed long ages and millions of individuals in order to shadow forth their pious annals!

(4.) God says of the Spirit, "He will shew you things to come," but at the same time he declares that his Revelation is complete. Men seem hitherto to have been entangled in the dilemma. If they refused to acquiesce in the promise, they offered violence to a plain scripture spoken under circumstances that make it plain that all believers are contemplated. If, on the other hand, they received the prediction, it seemed to them to make it necessary that they should become the recipients

of disclosures additional to those contained in the Scriptures. This theory obviates the difficulty. By giving two meanings to what is already in existence, it shows it to be unnecessary that the actual bulk of the sacred volume should be increased. By imposing the principle that the people of the bible is at once historical and theological, new truths are found contained in old envelopes. In laying down this doctrine, we are taught what is meant by that admonition, more than once given forth, to consider the old ways.

Thus, the believer is made a prophet, in the respectable, scientific, and very appreciable method of giving further development to the admitted word of God. Thus, all the while that he is literary, philosophical, the reverse of fantastic, and that he is performing that which the eye of the critic can follow and verify, he is scanning the future with a telescope supplied by heaven, and proving by his ability to use the instrument that the Spirit of the Most High stirs in the bosom of the sincere believer, affording to man preternatural marks of his high vocation.

To omit the remarks that might be made upon the first seventeen hundred years of the world's history, the period up to the *deluge*; to waive the discussion as to the doctrinal points that arise out of Adam, Eden, the Cherubim, Cain and Abel, Enoch, Noah, the Ark, the Flood, the dispersion at Babel; to leave these particulars,—and for the reason that they stand associated with the general

genealogy of the species, and not especially with the annals of the chosen people, we take our start from the PATRIARCHAL era.

Abraham, whose name means 'the father of many nations,' 'high father,' it having previously been Abram, who quits the domain of heathenism at the bidding of God, who sojourns in Egypt, who while there disowns his wife, who engages in war with pagan kings and vanquishes them, who, returning from his victory is met by the King of Righteousness and the King of Peace, and is blessed by him, after giving tithes of all that he possessed: Abraham, who is so long of becoming a father, whose wife bears a child after the period of natural child-bearing has long elapsed: Abraham, who when his son is weaned casts out the bond-woman and her child,—in whose household the doctrine-speaking right of circumcision is performed by divine injunction: Abraham, who when his son has come to man's estate leads him by the order of Jehovah to Mount Moriah, where he is on the point of slaying him as an offering, when Divinity interposes. How many facts of theology occur in his life alone!

Isaac becomes the father of two sons, who naturally and morally are two nations. The elder, the ancestor of the Edomites, sells his birth-right at the instigation of carnality, and thereby becomes the representative of the first form of the church of Christ. Jacob, the younger, because he had deceived his father and defrauded his brother, goes

into exile for a time, serves seven years for Leah whom he did not love, and fourteen for Rachel whom he did love. Both his wives resort to a peculiar method for augmenting his family, and presenting their hand-maidens to their husband, are in this fact no doubt the figures of that condition of things that has characterised the church, which has always been willing to take its proselytes from the world when it could not beget them by legitimate conversion.

The scene where Jacob wrestles with the angel, where he has his name changed from 'supplanter' into 'a prince with God,' is replete with analogies. Before this he prevailed over his brother by stratagem, as the first part of the career of religion has been an attempt to cheat rather than to conquer the foe: after this, a blessing appears to attend his efforts. The scene wherein he blesses the twelve Patriarchs supplies us with a succession of tableaux that afford a view of the leading aspects that are to characterize the gospel-church, down to the time of the end. This single incident contains quite enough to show that all these things are our ensamples (types), and are given for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come. In the description, in the names and in the order of the sons of Jacob, there is that which we think tallies with the twelve judges and the kings of Judah, and up to a certain point with the seven churches in Asia, and with the actual story of religion as come at by observation.

Reuben, who sees the son, who is the beginning of strength, the excellency of dignity, the excellency of power, who does not adhere, who defiles his father's bed, agrees with Ephesus, agrees with Apostolic declensions. Simeon and Levi, probably expressing combination between the church and the world, and declaredly typical of cruelty and violence, are easily reconciled with the church after the Apostolic period. Judah, so strong, the object of so much admiration to his brethren, a law-giver, and who is to prevail until Shiloh come; the resemblance between him and that potential, proud confederation, that sprung up under Constantine, and enjoyed so long and such extensive influence, is obvious. Zabulon, dwelling at the haven of the sea, with his border unto Zidon, stands for the trading principle. Issachar, an ass couching between two burdens, exhibits a fact that is certainly true of religion at every time, and probably more descriptive of it at one epoch than at others. Dan, defined as a serpent, and under whom things reach such a point as to deserve the exclamation, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord," coincides with Tola, a worm, a grub,—with Sardis, the lees or dregs. Naphthali, preceding the fruitful period, is most suitably portrayed as "giving goodly words," and most naturally foreshadows that Laodicean state in which *appearances* are favourable, but reality is absent. Joseph, the most fully drawn, the most lauded, on whom such copious blessings are poured down, carries that along with

him which defines him, and that which proves the moral texture of all. The phrase "from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel," conveys a meaning that of itself is sufficient to include the whole twelve within a spiritual circle. Benjamin, who shall ravin as a wolf, who shall devour the prey, seems to have a resemblance more than fanciful to that last era of the church whose phasis is especially this, that Christ plucks the spoil from the mighty and subjugates all his enemies.

The circumstance in Jacob's career, that he gives orders that his body should be transported to Palestine, gives rise to doctrinal considerations. It was a prophecy, it was a declaration that Egypt was not the normal condition of the church, it was an injunction to speculate upon the settled and victorious posture of religion.

Thus, from the calling of Abraham to the demise of Jacob, a period of more than two centuries, the way is thickly strewn with instances that prove the position for which we contend. From the earliest portion of the history of Israel, we collect cases enough to demonstrate, that this people was appointed to pass through their history in such a style, as that it should contain within it the fate of another race, whose career even now is only begun.

EGYPT, the next section, is shown to be mystical by such a passage as this, Rev. xi. 8, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt,

where also our Lord was crucified;" by those scriptures wherein the Jews are so severely censured for going to Egypt for help or horses; by that place where Rahab and the dragon are made synonymous; by that where Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is styled the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his waters, and by many other instances. That chapter then which relates what befel Israel in this land is not without reason and warrant held to be a doctrinal transaction. An influence exemplified by Pharaoh, and which there can be no question means legality, tyrannizes over Israel, endeavours to hinder their increase, imposes on them severe tasks, requires of them labours beyond their strength, refuses to permit them to go forth into the wilderness, when it has given leave retreats, is exposed to grievous calamities because of its captives, tormented by its sufferings allows them to withdraw, when they have begun their journey follows after with a view to bring them back, and finally, in the act of attempting to attack the Lord's chosen ones is swallowed up in the waters of the Red Sea. Here there is a captivity somewhat similar to that which is afterwards undergone in Babylon, and connected with such circumstances as renders it obvious that in the moral counterpart the two captivities are cotemporaneous, that they who are under the sway of legality are also in the empire of confusion. Considered from this point of view, Egypt, so plainly

allegorical, must yet yield ample matter for instruction.

How does the period during which this captivity lasts, viewed in relation to the Babylonish bondage, bear upon the time that the spiritual Israel is in the power of its enemies? What is the exact thought, derivable from the structures that the bondsmen were compelled to build? What is the doctrine arising out of Moses' sojourn of forty years in the wilderness? What is the theology of the several plagues that befel Egypt? Why was it that the magicians were compelled to stop at the particular point at which they desisted from counterfeiting the miracles of Moses? What is that Red Sea which parted in two, that Israel might pass through? These circumstances, that we have been contented to take as simple history, are obviously convertible into moral events. That the country is declared to be mystical; that its monarch obviously stands for an evil influence; that the river of the land is placed in a similar aspect; that every leading particular that we have mentioned flashes some theological circumstance upon the mind,—these facts materially assist the argument. They furnish the following help—that they bring four hundred and thirty years of the history of the chosen nation to the help of the demonstration. This is not the best known portion: it is not one that hitherto has been much repaired to by theologians. They have not ventured to think it spiritual, as a whole. Yet even when we

go up to it, with little succour from the past, it opens for our reception, it appeals to us as that which is a bed of doctrines. But upwards of four centuries of the annals of this people fall into their place as explanatory of that which has befallen the church of the New Testament. On what principle shall we conclude that any other portion of the same history is to be viewed in any other manner?

To find one section that offers so many analogies with modern affairs as to make it impossible that the resemblance in that case should be accidental, is to procure a reason why the other portions should be of the same complexion. In the absence of proof to the contrary, the circumstance that one chapter of a nation's history is seen to be an allegory, and is found to be a provision made whereby other men shall be enabled to decypher the intentions of the Most High,—to learn virtue and eschew wickedness: a priori, this fact affords strong reason why we should expect to find that the whole annals of the same people were written in order to subserve the like momentous design.

The chapter relating to the WILDERNESS perhaps offers the least resistance to the theory. The particulars that we are already able to deal with, show very plainly that this is a figurative people. We consider indeed that the general intention of this section has not yet been understood. We have been taught to believe that the design of the wilderness is to represent the ordinary aspect of the

believer's life, and that Canaan, attained to with difficulty, is a future state of blessedness. We are convinced that this is a mistake. The wandering and sinning character of the wilderness points it out to our view as corresponding with that incident which Paul names "the falling away:" the settled estate portrayed by Canaan is that better theology elsewhere depicted in the second temple, referred to frequently by the prophets, and predicted in all parts of the Bible. But although the main design of this part has not been understood, many of the details have received a spiritual and a correct interpretation. We obtain a right to deal with this section as mystical from the following expressions of the seventy-eighth Psalm, "Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:" This, standing as a preface to a narrative in which the events of the wilderness are a prominent ingredient, determines their character. They are not ordinary history. They are God's "law;" they are "a parable;" they are "dark sayings of old." There is another scripture that proves this truth in a perspicuous manner: In 1 Cor. x., the apostle, having specified some facts connected with the wilderness, and that *only*, says twice that these things were "types," and adds, that they were "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

When they quit Egypt, the ordinance of the Passover is instituted, to be throughout all generations a memorial of the signal deliverance whereof they were the objects, and that ceremony is made Christian and Catholic by the statement of the New Testament that "even Christ our pass-over is slain for us." Manna is appointed for food. This is called, in the Psalms, angels' food, and the corn of heaven. Its name means 'what is it?' thereby conveying the idea that spirituality when it descends upon a man comes as an unknown circumstance. The different regulations relating to it are not only translateable, but have all, or most of them, been rendered into moral equivalents. They weary of this their food, and cry for flesh. Their desire is granted; but along with the quails comes the pestilence: he afflicts them with leanness of soul. Here we have the case of the church of the New Testament at its outset. A spiritual system is proffered to it. This it has, in company with marvellous powers. It desires externals however, and it gets them; but along with them it gets the curses that befel Israel.

The case of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, is shown to be representative by the allusion that Jude makes to it, the same point being intimated by the passage that says, "Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not:" as also by the titles of we believe eleven Psalms that are inscribed for the sons of Korah. This becomes the type of that spirit of insubordination as regards religion, that

forms so broad a feature throughout all that period for which the wilderness stands.

Balaam, also made the head of a class, by Jude's reference to him, is asked to curse Israel; seems willing to have complied with the demand, but is constrained to bless. He, in correspondence with God, acquainted with the divine purposes, to a certain degree held in check by the sentiment of duty, yet thirsting for pelf to such an extent that he is at the bidding of Israel's enemy; he thus, strangely connected with both empires, and partaking of both natures, furnishes the most extraordinary of all instances of that anomalous character that was to be the result of a spurious and mixed theology. Indeed, so strangely constituted is he, that while we make no doubt that he exhibits a class *within* the pale of the faith, we are not aware that it has occurred to any one before us to place him in that category. As the people set out on their journey, the law is delivered to them from Sinai, and this is an admitted index of that revelation of divine things that takes place at the commencement of New Testament history. The ark of the covenant is borne in the midst of the host: when it halts, the march is suspended: when it advances, the people continue their journey: when in a state of motion, the watchword is, Arise, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered: when at rest, it is, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel. The mode of procedure is further intimated by a cloud and a pillar of fire,

the one for guidance by day, the other in the night season. By the way, among other thoughts that arise out of this cloud, is one that has not before been noted,—that when it stopped the people should halt, is probably a pictorial way of saying that when darkness hovers over a man's path that is an occasion in which he should tarry until he is favoured with more light. They suffer from thirst, and Moses being ordered to smite a rock, water gushes forth, and follows them through the wilderness. They are withstood in their journey by Og, king of Bashan, which signifies the cake in the tooth, and Sihon, king of the Amorites, which means the rooting out of bitterness. They murmured against God, and he sent serpents among them;—by his command they make a serpent of brass; they elevate it upon a pole, and they who look at it are healed. Their course toward the land of promise is singularly tortuous, therein depicting that state of society which has existed in Christendom during nineteen centuries, and which they who have no reference to this type have seen to be so little progressive, that they have derived the conclusion that man does not advance, but moves in circles. They send spies before them, to view the land, and they, frightened by the Anakims, or men of ornament, people tall in stature, fetch back such a report as alarms the people, who wander forty years, or a year for every day that the spies were absent.

Nadab and Abihu offered false fire, and in so

doing, present an image of that counterfeit piety which has abounded in the centres of orthodoxy, and which is described as bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Their leader, Moses, is permitted to take a view of the land from Pisgah, which means the hill, called also Abarim, which is passengers, and Nebo that prophesies? Moses dies, and there is this curious circumstance connected with his death, "that his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated," a point that would intimate that when legality is superseded by the true gospel, that it happens not because of the necessary decay of the law, but by the will of God. When he dies it is related, that "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day,"—a feature which indicates, perhaps, that it is hard to name the point where the body of Moses is superseded by the gospel.

Thus at this important part of Jewish history the events are of such an order as to justify the enquirer in persevering in the position with which we have commenced. It is not too much to say, that we are already able to transmute into spirituality the leading incidents belonging to the wilderness, which gives rise to the expectation that all are susceptible of the like treatment. Their career in the wilderness plainly shows that Israel is a theological nation. But as no reason is known why this chapter should be presumed to differ specifically from those that remain, the enquirer cherishes the theory that each subsequent epoch

will be found to consist of incidents that are equally capable of being turned into evangelical substance.

The book of JOSHUA is computed as comprising a period of twenty-four years. It relates how Rahab conceals the spies, which argues that divine truth begins in an ignoble manner at the moment when it first enters on the land of promise. The waters of Jordan, which means, the river of judgment, are divided, in order that the people may cross. This happens when the river is at its height, coinciding with all passages that would inform us, that the hour of judgment is that in which the iniquity of the world has proceeded to the utmost extent. Joshua circumcises the people; the manna ceases "on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land:" these figures scarcely require explanation. Jericho falls without weapon; the ostensible means used is the blowing seven trumpets, which seven no doubt accord with those in the Apocalypse. The seven principal tribes that inhabit Canaan come in powerfully to assist the demonstration, because they all denote *an evil quality*. Seven nations possessing the land, ordered by God to be destroyed, penalties decreed if this was neglected, the penalty incurred, these seven expressing as many of those vices which it is canonical to destroy,—here is a figure that of itself is sufficient to turn this whole book into theological soil. The apparent further subdivision of these into thirty-one, would afford

a tree consisting of seven larger limbs that separated off into many smaller branches.

The assignment of the territory by lot to the tribes, an incident that we must believe to be important from the frequent allusions that are made to it, is another feature that can easily be embraced in a general thought, as exhibiting the arrangements of a system that is well ordered in all things and sure.

After this question is ended, and it is thought of magnitude enough to occupy six chapters, there are two chapters devoted to the subject of the Cities of Refuge, a topic whose figurative nature is freely conceded.

At this point we might halt a moment to look at the argument that arises out of the code and liturgy revealed to this people. We have seen them grow from one stock into a numerous nation, enter Egypt, pass forth from it, go through the wilderness, and take possession of Canaan. But this people, the events of whose career we have glanced at, had the Oracles of God consigned to their care. They are ordered to build an ark of given shape and dimensions: all particulars belonging to it are specified with tedious minuteness: there is a tribe to take charge of it and its service; there are offerings of the most varied descriptions to be made; there are numerous holy seasons and festivals; there are many different modes of uncleanness; there are various crimes and penalties: If these things, of which they are

the stewards, be the forms and types of divine truths, how unlikely that the people itself should be of any different texture ! Their religion, their common laws, their food and clothing, one of their tribes which ministers in holy things, their disease of leprosy,—these are confessedly figurative matters : what a violent wrench would be requisite in order to put the other facts in a different category ! The ancestry from which they spring, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, are received as representatives of truths in the general church of God : what heterogeneous work would it be to place the descendants on another footing !

The book of JUDGES is considered to occupy two hundred and ninety-nine years. Its first chapter relates how that the inhabitants of the land were not utterly driven out,—a particular that is allowed to be of a symbolic nature. The history of Gideon ; the destruction of the host of Midian by means of the trumpets and the pitchers ; the story of Jephthah ; the deeds of Sampson ; the wars that are recounted, are of the sort that the sane interpreter would suppose to be typical, because, on any other hypothesis, he cannot see the propriety of their entering into the composition of the word of God. Containing incidents that are very insignificant in themselves, the evangelical critic accounts for their pettiness by considering that they are not so much facts as they are similitudes.

It is remarkable that there are *twelve* of these Judges. Their names are *Othniel*, the time, or

the hour of God; *Ehud*, of Benjamin, he that praises; *Barak*, of Naphthali, thunder, or in vain; *Gideon*, of Manasseh, that bruises and breaks, cutting off iniquity; *Abimelech*, father of the king; *Tola*, of Issachar, worm, grub; *Jair*, of Manasseh, my light, &c.; *Jephthah*, of Manasseh, that opens, or is opened; *Ibzan*, of Judah; *Elon*, of Zebulon, oak, grove, &c.; *Abdon*, of Ephraim, a servant, cloud of judgment; *Sumpson*, of Dan, my sun, others say, little sun.

Judges ii. 7-11, gives us a commencement under Joshua, which is Jesus, that corresponds with the beginning of the Christian church, say Ephesus. It also tells of declension, like that which occurs in the history of the seven churches. Jephthah, at a point well advanced in the chronicle, and meaning 'he that opens,' would cut in with Philadelphia, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." Elon, and he of Zebulon, meaning a *grove*, would express admirably the carnality that succeeded the Reformation, owing to the fact that adventitious matter was continued in the church. Abdon, a servant, or cloud of judgment, would correspond with the Laodicean condition. Thus, Judges, with authority to back it, would become a cycle. The statement made chap. xvii. 6, and repeated three other times, would make out that during this period things were lawless and without government. The remark occurring so often, may be accepted as the special clue to the book.

Not to spiritualize this book would involve these consequences: that, following much that has been so dealt with, and preceding much that we have authority for so treating, it should stand in the middle, in the raw state; that, relating events that belong to the history of that very nation that was a type before, and that becomes a type afterwards, it should be treated on another principle; that, recounting incidents which sanction, nay, enjoin war and assassination, by so doing justify a morality that is not canonical; that, narrating circumstances, many of which have no magnitude, and others scarcely any meaning, would place the word of God on a level with a prating chronicle that recounts trifles, because the writer wants mind and the power to select: Such are results that would flow from taking but the surface of this book. The other reason to which we have referred, why it should be endowed with spiritual meaning, is, that there is marked concord between it and other lines of events whose typicality has been ascertained. A good commencement, a gradual declension until a very low point is reached, then a revival, followed by another evil period: in this there is resemblance to what occurs in the seven churches, partial agreement at least with the predicted career of the twelve patriarchs, we incline to think analogy with that catalogue of incidents detailed in the books of Kings and Chronicles from David to Babylon, and we suppose, as in

these other cases, a picture of what has actually occurred from Jesus Christ to our day.

The book of RUTH is very capable of being dealt with in the same style. It assigns itself to the time of the Judges. Elimelech, which is 'my God the King,' marries Naomi, which is 'agreeable;' they both belong to Bethlehem, the house of bread, are both Ephrathites, which is 'abundance;' their sons are Mahlon, a song, and Chilion, perfect. Impelled by the fact that there is famine in the land, as in the case when the church went into Egypt, they "go to sojourn in the country of Moab." Whilst there, the woman loses her husband and her sons, and at the end of ten years she returns to her own land, bringing with her Ruth, which is 'satisfied,' her daughter-in-law. This last goes forth to glean, is taken notice of by the master of the reapers, who is Boaz, that is 'in the strength,' lays herself at the feet of Boaz in the night, is married by him, and becomes the ancestress of David. There can be little doubt but that this is an exemplification of that doctrine which re-appears in many other shapes, the bringing in of the Gentiles.

The two books of SAMUEL are represented as running through a period of one hundred and fifty-four years. They contain the histories of Eli and Samuel, of Saul and David. We have such facts related as the victory of the Philistines, the carrying away of the ark, and the effect which the captive shrine wrought among those who had taken

it away. Who can question that these facts relate to gospel history? Moreover, we have the crowning of Saul, the appearance of David, his fight with the Philistine, Saul's enmity against him with the many consequences it involved, and Saul's defeat and death. As an additional reason why we should consider that these situations in the life of David are the symbols of truths relating to our economy, they are carried over into the Psalms. Many of them at least are set forth as the occasion and text of odes that are designed to express estates and sentiments that will not be completed before the elect be gathered in.

The second book of Samuel is devoted to the history of David, from the time of Saul's death down nearly to the close of his reign. It includes such events as the bringing back of the ark, the subduing of the Philistines and Moabites, the affair with Uriah, the conduct of Absalom, his defeat and death, the numbering of Israel, with the evil consequences that flowed from it. In the records of the bible there is not one personage, in regard to whom it is more sure that he is a representative man. But to say this of David, is, by natural consequence, to affirm that the events which revolve around him are of the same texture with himself. To make the man typical, and to put what he says and does in a different category, would be a strange way of reasoning. Whether the two books of Samuel are complete in themselves, and, like parts of the bible that we have

already adduced, form a circle of given diameter, may be doubted. In the mean time, and without entering on this more precise view, we state without hesitation, that the situations contained in them are obviously capable of being translated. That David and his adventures are old and new, have two aspects, belong to history and also to divinity, will not be questioned. If this be conceded, we procure from the admission, the argument, that about forty years more of the history of Israel, and that a very significant portion, is symbolical of the events of the doctrinal Israel.

The two books of **KINGS** are reckoned to comprise the history of a period of four hundred and twenty-seven years. The two books of **CHRONICLES**, although they commence at a different point, and terminate a few years sooner, yet as they on the whole run in a parallel line, they may without much impropriety be discussed as if they formed the same cycle. In a general way, we feel quite satisfied that this circle is of the same compass as that to which we have pointed in the twelve patriarchs, in Judges, and in the seven churches. There is, a good beginning, a gradual falling away, different attempts at reform, and a sad catastrophe. The commencement, David; the end, Babylon, put the whole on a mystical footing. The two ends of the line, belonging to the symbolic, throws the intermediate space into the same predicament.

Solomon makes affinity with Pharaoh, king of Egypt; he builds a temple in concert with Hiram,

king of Tyre; he is longer building his own house than he is in building the house of the Lord. These facts readily find their counterparts in that splendid, but mixed system, that came in soon after the close of the Apostolic era. The many wives of Solomon, the schism that took place under Rehobam, the consequent formation of the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel, will occur to the mind that knows the history of the modern church, as symbols whose counterparts it might not be hard to find. For instance, such a great division as that which took place at the time of the Athanasian and Arian controversy, might well be supposed to have some evident symbol appropriated to it.

The mission of Elijah and Elisha seem explicable on the notion that they sketch out those systems of pure religion that intersperse the dark era that we consider to be symbolized. Israel is not at this time altogether without its influence on the Gentile world, just as the church hitherto has exerted some little action in the way of conversions. Naaman the Syrian, a leper, attracted by the fame of Elisha, comes and washes in the waters of Jordan. He was a great man in his own country, which possibly points to the circumstance, that they have been only *the leading intellects* that during this dark era come to test the efficacy of the waters of Israel.

The great reform wrought by Hezekiah, which, after all, did not hinder, but that some time after the people were carried into Babylon, we regard

as concatenating with what the church calls the Reformation; which event has been followed by the flood of confusion, division, and irreligion, under which we now suffer. A period of more than four centuries occurring in the middle of the Hebrew annals, commencing with a personage avowedly representative, concluding with that Babylon that is so largely treated of in the Apocalypsc, thickly interspersed with events that reveal their own typicality, telling of groves made round altars, partial attempts to remove these, all ended by a giving over of the nation to its enemies: the agreement between this and other circles, its correspondence with ecclesiastical history, is not only supposable, but notorious.

The circle of **ESTHER**, which is 'secret,' or 'hidden,' is probably of small size. Like that of **Ruth**, it is probably an interior circle, playing within one of larger dimensions. The history belongs to the reign of **Ahasuerus**, which name, meaning merely 'prince,' or 'chief,' is quite reconcilable with the idea of the person being **Darius**, or rather **Cyrus**, who flourished at this time. There seems to be something more than a common concord between the two following scriptures: "Now it came to pass in the days of **Ahasuerus** (this is **Ahasuerus** which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces)." "It pleased **Darius** to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom." Be this as it may, **Esther**,

a Jewess, niece of Mordecai, which means 'contrition,' or 'bitter bruising,' attracts the favour of the Gentile prince under whom the people were captive, is married to him, and by her influence procures many favours and privileges for her nation. Esther then represents probably the amount of genial influence that religion exercises during the time when it is considered to be under the thralldom of the Gentiles. But this is a piece of Jewish history, rated as extending through ten years. If it expresses the spiritual situation that we have named, it comes in as another link in the chain of our argument.

The books of EZRA and NEHEMIAH are computed to extend through a little more than a hundred years. The first of these relates a return of the Jews out of captivity, the building of the temple, the opposition it met with, its completion, Ezra's coming to Jerusalem, how he obliged those that had married strange wives to put them away. The second relates Nehemiah's concern for Jerusalem, and the commission he obtained from the king to go thither, his building the wall of Jerusalem, his redressing the grievances of the people, his finishing the wall, the account he took of the people, the religious solemnities that he observed, his zeal in reforming various abuses, etc., etc. If we feel sure of our ground anywhere, it is here. From these two records, from the prophecies of Haggai, 'the turning round,' and Zechariah, 'memory of the Lord,' that correspond with them, we learn that the Jews

returned at three separate times from their captivity, that the intervals were owing to the opposition of their foes, that they built first the altar, then the temple, then the city, that they were withstood by enemies of two or three different kinds, as if both by religious and irreligious, that their enterprise was at first treated with great scorn, that they wrought carrying their weapons of war in their hands, that at last their endeavours caused their foes to respect and offer to assist them, that these proffers were rejected, and that the work arrived at a happy consummation. Here is a century of Jewish history, and it the last given in the Old Testament, every point in which already discloses its spirituality. Here, at the close of this history, is that New Jerusalem that we have at the termination of the Apocalypse. There is no prominent fact in either of these books that we would fear to go up to, and to name that counterpart event in actual theology of which it is the form.

The book of Job has been treated hitherto as the mere story of a patriarch. This man who will not give up his integrity, who holds on to it in spite of the many chastisements with which he is visited, who is addressed by three friends that ply him with inconclusive arguments which do not alter his resolve, who at last is spoken to by Elihu, (he is my God himself,) who then sees what before was hidden from him, and seeing it repents in dust and ashes, whose "captivity" is then turned, who prays for his friends, and receives more blessings

than he possessed at the first : Him too we would have no difficulty in proving to be a representative man. He pictures out the church under the legal influence, the evils entailed upon it by its bad tenacity, the futile attempts to reform it by spurious teachers, the successful issue of the true teaching imparted at the last. Thus, under the guise of the picturesque biography of an old patriarch, we have a circle as large as any of the preceding. By analysing the arguments made use of by Job's three friends, we do not doubt that we shall get the epitome of that weak and erroneous theology that has been addressed to the Edomite, and addressed in vain. On the other hand, by examining critically the theology of Elihu, one may be put in possession of that set of ideas that shall effect what could not be accomplished by the former arguments. Thus, the circle of Job would be regarded as containing the reasons why we have not been able to prevail against Satan, and the modes which, on Divine authority, we are entitled to believe that he shall be conquered by.

The book of PSALMS is the portion of Scripture with which we are the most intimately conversant. Professing to be familiar with it in all its parts, we say of it, with no hesitation, that it is a circle of the largest diameter, and that it embraces all the modes of feeling and principle that the gospel church passes through, from its first formation down to the completion of the Christian economy. The first Psalm draws a line of demarkation be-

tween the believer and the world. In the title of the fourth we behold the entrance of the evil principle, in the circumstance of Absalom rebelling against his father. From that point onward, many of these compositions are mainly occupied with the theme of the many and terrible griefs to which the writer is subjected. We have a long confession of much sin, a detailed description of much sorrow. When we reach the seventy-fourth, misfortune has reached its acme. There the people are spoken of as cast off; the enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they break down the carved work of the sanctuary, at once with axes and hammers: "They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled by casting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground:" "We see not our signs; there is no more any prophet; neither is there among us any that knoweth how long." In the seventy-ninth, similar ideas are expressed, and the fact is fully stated, that the heathen have prevailed over the people of God. The same thought is expressed in the eightieth, by means of a prolonged metaphor. When we reach the eighty-fifth, the horizon brightens—"Lord, thou hast been favourable to thy land; thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob." The hundred and eighth enlarges on the conquests that shall be achieved over heathen foes. The hundred and tenth views Messiah as seated on the right hand of the Father, with the rod of his strength going forth from Zion. The hundred and eight-

teenth states that the time is at last come for relating the mercies of God to his people—"Let Israel *now* say, that his mercy endureth for ever." The hundred and twenty-sixth describes the joy that Israel experienced when delivered from Babylon—"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream: Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them." The concluding Psalms are triumphant. The last five all commence with the words, "Praise ye the Lord." These songs and hymns reflect a variety of the situations in the life of king David; at the same time, they coincide with the history of the Jewish people. Like other circles that we have pointed to, they describe declension; and having brought the nation to a low point, they again ascend the scale, and pourtray, as it were, a new Jerusalem. But if the Psalms, while they run parallel with Jewish history, and touch it at its leading points, also coincide with the life of the believer, and the career of the spiritual church, they supply a strong proof of our argument. Sentiments, that in one sense apply to the literal history of the Jews, are found by investigation to be the very portrait of the gospel church, of course demonstrate the Jews to be a typical people; at all events, in the whole extent that the parallel applies. It cannot be disputed that the Psalms describe Jewish situations. Unless they did, what would be the meaning of

some twenty inspired titles that connect them with events which befel king David? and what is the sense of those marked instances, in which Israel is beheld overcome by the enemy, led into captivity, and delivered from the oppressor? On the other hand, it is beyond doubt that these same Psalms embody the spiritual history of the church of the New Testament. Since, then, they have these two aspects, the conclusion comes out plainly, that the national is the symbol of the theological Israel.

The PROVERBS are the composition of Solomon, a Jewish monarch. Among many other things, they contain descriptions of Christ and his religion, under the name of *wisdom*. All the sayings in the book have a double scope. It ends by portraying the church under the figure of the good woman. That this book, written by a Jew, reaches out to the end of time, and exhibits the final aspect of the Christian religion, is an indirect argument in confirmation of our thesis.

ECCLESIASTES is written also by Solomon. What is the exact theory of the treatise, we have not examined. That, at a number of points, it has been found to contain matter capable of being brought into closest relation with the moral history of mankind, is quite evident. But as far as this is the case, in the like extent does our position get confirmation.

The SONG OF SOLOMON is the aspiration of the bride after her beloved. She finds, she loses, she

seeks, she again finds him, she exults in her success, she looks out wistfully in regard to the fate of her fellow-beings. But these postures are a complete account of all the phases through which religion has passed, or will pass. That a Jew, inspired by God, so put together a song of loves as that it reveals all the relations in which the Almighty and his chosen ones shall stand to each other, helps the argument that the Jew is a representative man, and comprehends the Christian in his career.

The PROPHECIES are the writings of sixteen authors. They form between a fourth and a fifth of the bible. Some of them relate to the period before the captivity. Three or four relate principally to the captivity. Jonah refers to the time when the church is in the belly of the whale; and the greater number devote considerable space to the delineation of that glorious era to which the church must attain. In mournful language they tell of the evil condition of the commonwealth of Israel, the indignation that the Most High entertains towards his heritage, the ignominious posture which they occupy relative to the heathen. They state how contemptible is the position of the daughter of Zion, what pollutions there are in the temple, how treacherous and mercenary are the priests, the shepherds, the prophets. They, in repeated instances, give detailed accounts of the doom that shall come down on certain enemies of Israel, on Edom, on Moab, on Damascus and Gaza,

on Tyre and Ammon. Sometimes we have a doleful descant that relates how beset and forlorn is the man of God; sometimes an angry denunciation that declares what vengeance shall be wreaked upon Egypt or Babylon; ever and anon, a rapturous strain which tells how, in *that day*, the deaf shall hear the word of the Lord, and the lame man leap as an hart. These prophecies are conceived in such a manner as to give countenance to bishop Newton when he imposed the doctrine, that they are confined to Jewish history: and the notion must be plausible, seeing that, in the main, it is the opinion that is still held. But if these writings are so much based on Jewish history as to give speciousness to this idea; if the parity between the situations of the national and the spiritual Israel is so great as to make it natural that an acute person should see but the one line of events, how much is our argument helped! Bishop Newton sees nothing more in the prophets but predictions that, with few exceptions, were fulfilled at or before the first coming of Jesus Christ. This has appeared so natural an idea, that it has been currently entertained ever since. Yet this view is not tenable. There are far too many cases in which these predictions pass forward to the very last events in the era of the gospel church, for us to allow it. But we accept it so far. We take it as a broad argument in favour of our position. It utters this statement that so inseparably are Jewish and Christian history associated, that whole

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books, which incontestably foretell the history of the gospel church, have, by acute persons, been understood merely in their first intention.

The EVANGELISTS take cognizance of a period of thirty years and upward. They are the biography of a Jew ; they fall within the precincts of the *law* ; they mention events, the most of which occurred before the veil of the temple was rent in twain. But all facts in the story of Jesus Christ are emblems. Whether it be his birth in Bethlehem, the designs of Herod against him, his deportation into Egypt, his sojourn in Nazareth, the long time in which he remained obscure, his coming forward, his journeys, miracles, teachings, transfiguration ; his betrayal, crucifixion, resurrection, subsequent conversations with his disciples, and ascension ; not only are all these circumstances capable of being turned into the events of the Christian church, but there are not any of them that even now we would find much difficulty in so using. But the fact that the Evangelists, while in one sense they belong to Jewry, are in another, figures of things "in the heavens," lends aid to our position—that Israel pertaining to the flesh is a model of the Israel after the spirit. Jesus, the Jew, yet portraying in his life the peculiarities of his church down to the end of time : this can hardly be, without carrying along with it the principle that at present is our thesis.

The other parts of the New Testament lend many confirmations to our position. Thus Paul,

in Romans, reasons in such a manner about Israel as to make it conclusive that he speaks of the church of Christ. But if, without any explanation, Israel can be predicated of Christianity, this *tacit* way of intermingling the two is very symptomatic. It as much as says, that no comment is needed. It alleges, that so plain a matter is it, that the two may properly be combined; that no previous remark to that effect is required.

In the first epistle to the Corinthians there is a long passage whose object is to show that the wilderness is a figure, having relation to our present economy. It is twice said that these things are types, and were given for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come. But if the wilderness be of this texture, what is there about it to separate it from the rest of Jewish history? In the epistle to the Galatians, it is expressly said that Sarah and Hagar are an allegory, the one pointing to the church that shall be, the other to that Jerusalem that has been, which is in bondage with her children. But we cannot see any thing about this part of patriarchal history to divide it off from the rest. If these two women are types, the conclusion is, unless reason to the contrary be assigned elsewhere, that the other parts of the Jewish annals are of the like complexion. In the epistle to the Philippians it is written, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." This is a broad statement,

to the effect that the Jew is co-extensive with the Christian, and it would require some other passage limiting, or excepting, to prevent us looking for the analogy at every point. The epistle to the Hebrews is mainly employed in showing the connexion between the worship and service of the Jew and the principles of the Christian religion. But if the liturgy be declaredly symbolic, that is a strong reason why the people that used it should be in the same category. The epistle of James is addressed to the twelve tribes that are scattered abroad. But long before this epistle was written, these twelve had ceased to have an existence. Than this, no fact in all history can be plainer. The twelve tribes there intended, were not the national, but the spiritual Israel. The title virtually contains this meaning—I address this writing to the members of the body of Christ, scattered through the earth, and through time; and I name them, by a symbol, the twelve tribes of Israel. But this statement carries within it the principle for which we contend—the identity between the Jew and the believer. In the first epistle of Peter we read, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people,” which again is the predicate that the Israelite is the Christian. But this general affirmation contains philosophically within it the particulars that we seek to bring out. The epistle of Jude touches the Jewish economy at many points—Sodom and Gomorrah, Cain, Balaam, Korah and Enoch,

are adduced in such a way as to show that they are used as representative facts. But if these circumstances, occurring at irregular intervals, are types, they bear along with them that whole history of which they form a part. In Revelation we read, "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." To this we add the text in Romans, "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." This is as broad an affirmation as can be conceived, to the effect that the Jew and the believer are the same character. The expressions in Revelation, "The *doctrine* of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel;" and the other, "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman, Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols:" these passages add to the argument which contends for the typicality of the whole Jewish economy. Not to dwell upon particular instances, the seven trumpets, agreeing with the events connected with the compassing about of Jericho; the sealing of the twelve tribes of Israel; the horsemen, that seem to correspond with those in Habakkuk, where the Chaldeans are de-

scribed; the little book that the prophet eats, as in the prophecies of Ezekiel; the two olive trees, agreeing with those seen by Zechariah; the order given to measure the temple; the expression "The great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified;" the time, times and half a time; the beast that unites the qualities of the four described by Daniel; the song of Moses and the Lamb that is sung; the drying up of Euphrates; the reference to the frogs of Egypt; the long account of the downfall of Babylon; the speaking of Messiah under the name of the Lamb, the allusion to his marriage, the winepress that he treads; the reference to Gog and Magog; the account of the holy city, New Jerusalem; the statement "I am the root and the offspring of David:" these are cases where the lines touch,—instances which prove our position.

In this wide survey, the examples wherein there is coincidence between Old and New Testament, are wonderfully numerous; so much so, that we consider that the general theorem would have been propounded sooner, but for the fact of certain ordinances which it would have compromised. To pursue this mode of enquiry is to obey the injunction given Jer. vi. 16, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." On the principle which we defend, one is enabled to obey this precept in a manner consistent with the most eager thirst

for knowledge. Viewed through the medium in which we look at it, it is an invitation, not to go back, but to proceed forward. Thus, a command which has been interpreted so as to teach a passive acquiescence in what is, or a recurrence to even darker superstitions than may be practised at any given moment, is rescued from such unworthy consequences, and is made to teach a lesson consistent with the loftiest things that are elsewhere said of the Divine character, and of the plan of redemption. It is declared of the Holy Spirit, "And he will shew you things to come." The systems that have prevailed hitherto, if they had made any account of this promise, would have been compelled to suppose the addition of *new matter* to the record. But this would involve a principle, diametrically opposed to the canon laid down in the concluding verses of the bible. It would have been to incur the curse denounced against him who shall "add" to the word of God. The theory that we propound, avoids such consequences, for it prophecies by unwrapping the roll of a book, by developing materials already in existence. The prophet says, "Break up your fallow ground," the scribe "instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Previous modes of interpretation had no means of realizing these scriptures: they virtually taught that our theology is complete, that it can look for no accessions, and that any deliverance

that should befall the church was to come, not from improved ideas, but from extraneous sources. The method which we propound, in connexion with our present theme, is at once orthodox and innovating. It breaks up fallow ground, it discovers new things, not by adding to the amount of the record, but by assigning to all a double meaning, by going beneath the surface of Revelation, by adding to what we know, all that prodigious mass of material that is rightfully obtained, by proving a parallel between the whole dispensation of the Jew, and the entire history of the spiritual church.

LECTURE II.

INFIDELITY IN ITS TWO FORMS OF THE PHARISEE AND THE SADDUCEE.

THE imputation of infidelity has been principally laid by what the Scripture terms the "masters of assemblies," against any class that presumes to question their authority, their doctrine, or their morality. But, as it might happen in such a case, that he who applied the epithet was the unbeliever, and he to whom it was applied was the faithful person, it is of consequence that *we* should not be betrayed into such looseness of thought. It ought not to signify to us how long or how often terms may have been abused; we should be willing to be brought within the bounds of accurate thinking, provided always that there be sure means of coming at it. If the Christian be a person who, in the sight of God at least, is one and invariable; if there be that about him which is essential, so that it could not be otherwise; then, to seize on that circumstance, is to find ourselves in possession of accurate data. It should not matter to us that the name of Christian may

be arrogated, and that those who take it without right, designate as unbelievers any who resist them, whether from righteous or improper motives; our endeavour should be to escape from the realms of custom and authority, and get our feet upon the solid ground of divine philosophy. Nothing accurate, so far as we are aware, has been written on this subject. Converted and unconverted men have been alike content to think vaguely concerning it. Belonging to corporations, in which both seemed to feel an equal interest, they have with similar acerbity, and with equal looseness, charged their opponents with infidelity, whatever might be the nature of their opposition.

A man of tolerable powers of thinking would wish to find a way out from this region of twilight and blunder. He would be disposed to weary of looking on at a contest where, age after age, the same evolutions were gone through, without any result. When he considered during how many centuries certain descriptions of persons had assumed the right to dictate what the rest of society should think; when he reflected that they who withstood them made use of the objections that had been brought forward a thousand times without perceptible influence, and that they in their turn were assailed by those rejoinders that had been hurled times without number at similar characters in previous instances, he would be disposed to put the question, whether this interminable style of fighting was in the very nature of things, or

whether it was not rather an accident that might be got rid of by more thorough analysis.

Sir Walter Scott used to take pleasure in relating a story of a chase that was carried on at a place called Balbirnie, in Fife. The hunters were elderly men, of calm natures, and, we do not doubt, of portly and comely appearance. They met at fixed intervals and contentedly pursued the same hare, the chase being ended by the creature making her escape by a well known hole in a particular fence. This denouement, being the usual and expected one, does not seem to have disturbed the equanimity of any among the quiet fraternity. The pleasures of the field being ended, they were wont to repair to an adjoining change-house, where, after a comfortable dinner and a moderate quantity of drink, they returned at a decent hour to their several spouses. They liked each other's society, they loved the air and the exercise; perhaps there were some among them who were prepared to depone that they valued the aspects of nature that were disclosed to their musing eyes as they cantered over the accustomed range; beyond doubt they all relished the repast, with the habitual toasts and jokes that circled the board; it is also to be hoped that they all returned with joy, if not with rapture, to their wives and children. This reunion might have lasted longer than it did, but for the presence of an eager spirit, who was not content with the amount of excitement that sufficed to the others. This man thrust

his great-coat into the hare's sally-port, and when the poor animal, now grown fat and somewhat tame, was seeking to escape by her beloved door of retreat, she was caught and killed. It was remarked that after this event the hunt did not prosper, its members died off, and the publican failed in business. Some time after, the question was put to the inn-keeper, what had become of the impetuous spirit, the owner of the great-coat: The answer was, "He's dead, and his saul kens noo whether Balbirnie's hare got fair play!" Perhaps the conduct of this person does not admit of justification, whether viewed in relation to the rules of sport, or the higher principles of everlasting ethics; be that as it may, it is good as an illustration. There was a practical nature concerned, that did not allow its possessor to be involved in that which did not effect its object. We are met, thought this direct nature, to kill a hare, and if the old method does not succeed, we should try something new; we ought not to return always to our helpmates with the tale that Balbirnie's hare escaped through the gap.

A spirit of this complexion would aim at stopping the breach in this question, and although time and precedent were adduced to cause it to follow an aimless course, it would rise up against such objections and inquire how something might be effected. Whatever be the conditions on which belief depends, unbelief will consist in not complying with them. If, on the authority of the Divine

word, the following be a correct definition of what is contained in belief, then it must be allowed that no one can claim the benefit of the principle unless he be in possession of it: "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." If this be the very mind of the Spirit, then no one is in a right position, unless he be within the circumference of the circle here described.

One person may evade acquiescence in one method; another may have a different way: we are not called upon to attach any importance to such accidental and secondary points. This, although apparently obvious, has not been regarded. Men who have not complied with the above regulation, who have not been taught of the Spirit, they and their pupils have by millions arrogated the right of being considered to have faith, and the title to denounce those who have disputed their pretensions. We are willing to admit the adventitious circumstance of *costume*; we consent to own that the infidelity of two persons may have a different appearance. One may say, Lord, Lord, while he performs not the deeds that ought to emerge from a profession of the gospel; another may evince his unbelief by directly impugning revelation. The accident differs, but that is no reason why the substantial fact should not be the same. If, indeed, it could be shown that the

same book that defined what constitutes faith contained passages that recognized other ways, we might be compelled to make room for a list of exceptions; if it could be demonstrated that this infallible umpire, while it stated that belief meant essentially such and such a state of mind, went on to say that one could work himself up to a position that was accepted as righteousness; if it asserted that a specified amount of will-worship would pass current for religion; if it deponed that a given quantity of ceremonial would answer instead of piety; if it propounded two methods at least,—one wherein it was offered to a man that he should be saved by the Spirit,—another, that undertook to save him for an assigned quantity of effort; if it alleged that the Deity was capable of being propitiated by profession, and that he was an admirer of hypocrisy, then the *ecclesiastical* recipe would effect its object, because it would be able to prove its authority from the word of God.

One, pretending to be liberal, should frankly acknowledge anything that his opponents can fairly claim. To deny that there is a *formal* difference between the style of the Pharisee and that of the Sadducee, would be to take a stand that could not be honestly maintained. Their robes and accent are not the same. On the other hand, to allow that the difference amounted to anything essential, would be to contravene Scripture, and to assert, that he who entered by the window had

got fairly into the sheep-fold. We admit more than this. We allow that where religion is concerned, men are in the habit of bringing so little mind into play, that a difference in an accident is esteemed of much moment. But deriving our ideas of what should be from an infallible source, we cannot consent to receive the formal, in place of the essential. Learning from inspiration, that whatsoever is not of faith is sin; that the sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to God; that the language held to him is, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth my words behind thee." Taught by this authority, that not only is hypocrisy not agreeable to the Most High, but that it is the mode of character that He detests the most, we have good cause to refuse consenting to the empiricism in which we are invited to concur. To those who ask such acquiescence of us, we say, we cannot receive your counterfeit as genuine; we allow it to be ingenious; we admit that it often stands associated with much that is esteemed respectable and amiable; we own that its drapery is, æsthetically speaking, imposing; and that persons of beautiful talent, often dedicate their powers to the service of this temple, raised by the spirit of evil: we also admit, that the deception is often so good, that it would deceive, if that were possible, the very elect; but all that, does not overturn our statement, that God is not in it. We

cannot consent to receive a theology that pretends to adopt a principle at one side, and then drops it at another; that says, we are saved by the Spirit of God, at one moment, and contradicts this by virtually affirming at another, that we are saved by profession and will-worship. A creed should be consistent. We are willing to make another admission to the admirer of the ecclesiastical system, and to own that he adopts the *most popular* mode. Mothers and children understand him. A horse that has acquired the reputation for sagacity by stopping at every place where it has been before, could comply with many of the requisites of his mechanical piety. He should be charmed to hear us admit, that if God be not with him, he can at least lead the multitude captive. From all that we have seen of him, so long as he can accomplish this object, he cares very little for more abstract considerations.

Some men love nothing so much as a *principle*. If they cannot have that, they feel as if they had nothing. Impugn their argument, and, for a time at least, you blur all creation to their view. Another class are interested solely about *results*. They give you the argument, provided you hand them over what they consider the solids. Any logic you use, they estimate purely as it appears likely to affect Diana of the Ephesians. If the multitude do not understand, you are left in possession of your propositions, and your antagonists feel as little concern in what you are doing as the

occupants of fortresses in Flanders might be supposed to evince about the mimic warfare on the bowling green of Uncle Toby and his servant Corporal Trim. It is only at the moment when the people begin to betray a consciousness of your presence, and to say that there is something in your reasoning, that their leaders show that they are aware of your presence, by protesting that your argument is badly constructed, and that your views are blasphemous.

To those to whom the fashion of the thing is the all in all, the distinction between the Pharisee and the Sadducee will look important, because the one affects to uphold the Christian system, while the other arraigns it. They who can understand that the same nature may subsist under dissimilar forms, will be prepared to sympathise with us when we urge the doctrine, that we should "try the spirits whether they are of God;" and if the essence can be shown to them to be the same, it will not matter to them that the accident and mode is different. When we think how far men are advanced in certain branches, it is remarkable to observe how incapable they are in this direction. In the case of a mineral, a chemical element, a mechanical power, they are quick to recognize the same principle, under various manifestations. Wide as is the apparent interval between coal and the diamond, they have discovered that they are members of one series. Even children are made aware of the proportion of iron that enters into the hu-

man body, and that levers of all the different kinds are to be found in the articulations and muscular structures of the various creatures. But when the object is to apply this principle to a question of *spirit*, men seem forsaken by the penetration that distinguished them before. A Pharisee who has advanced himself by adapting religion to every petty circumstance of time and place, who, with petty powers and the basest motives, insists upon ruling, he will be heard denouncing the drama, romance, or Combe's Constitution of Man. Many are annoyed at his intolerance and tyranny, but it does not occur even to them to go to the root of the matter. They call him bigot, perhaps hypocrite, but they are far from seeing the depth of the delusion. He is by no means, as he would have men suppose, in league with God. He is not fighting his battles. Not merely is he not what he gives himself out—the commissioned interpreter of the word of God,—he is the very character which that word most loudly and frequently denounces. And yet, when he inveighs against Voltaire, Hume, or Byron, no one sees how thoroughly he is without authority to act as he does. His robes, his attitudes, his solemn tones, seem to impose even upon those whom he attacks. Even they cannot strip him bare, and see and show him to be the most unrighteous creature under the canopy of heaven.

Satan, when he comes forward with some degree of frankness, and says, I deny that book

called the bible to be a message from God to men, is taken at his word—is believed to be the devil, and is called knave and fiend in a very indignant and vituperative manner. Satan, when he comes forward as the theologian; when, in this capacity, he distracts households about questions of no moment; when he allies himself with all that is brutal, and leads it forward into action against all that is intelligent; when he fills society with the feeling that esteems posture the one thing needful; when he thus, by means of numbers, constitutes the Pharisee ruler over those who are his superiors in intellect and morals,—the curious thing is, that in no direction is suspicion aroused; in no case is there a tendency induced to discuss the rationale of all this; in no instance is it said, this is hell in masquerade; from no quarter does the remark come, that this is the worst character that can be, seeing that it is Satan disguised by putting on the garments of the sanctuary. The very Sadducees, whom he has supplanted, not by absolute mind, but by leading the rabble up against them, are half taken in by the imposture, and are certainly not aware that their antagonist belongs, after all, to their own camp. Men who can trace oxygen through all its combinations with other substances; persons who can follow the hand along all its descents, until it terminates in some rude claw, or flipper, are unable to perceive their own nature when it has pulled on a priestly dress. To attack the word of God by representing it as immoral

or absurd, that deceives few, and is accounted to be Satan himself without doubt. To concoct it into such a creed as that it makes men more the children of hell than they were before,—this trick deludes, and seems capable of being indefinitely repeated.

This circumstance is traceable to weak modes of religion. Systems that contain, as essential dogmas, that we must not judge, that it is the nature of charity to believe the opposite of what may appear to be true, that we are not entitled to take cognizance of motives, that one man is necessarily a mystery to his fellow, that it is indecorous to speak so plainly of religion as to say that the Spirit of God dwells in the believer, that it is indecent for a person to be sure that he is in a regenerate state, that the countenance is no index of the character: where such ideas are prevalent, and are implicitly believed, the Pharisee is well sheltered. That he may not look narrowly into his own condition, he is empowered to consider that a man may be converted without knowing it. That he may not be shown up to others, they are bound over to give credit to his professions, under the penalty of being reputed unbelievers if they do otherwise. Thus fenced in from himself and from others, the formalist is authorised to regard himself a Christian, except in the case of one or two crimes, that many men are protected from by constitution. I proceed to deal, in an orderly way,

with some of the characteristic features incident to these two leading modes of unbelief.

I. The Pharisee,—deserves to be considered, first, from the cause that he has always been by much the most formidable in respect of numbers. His range extends from the true believer, who, with religion in his heart, is in a certain extent the slave of externals, down to the sheerest formalist who insults Christianity by his mechanical adherence to a creed, sound or unsound. From Martin Luther or Matthew Henry, who, loving God, yet dealt in will-worship and externals, down to the petty individual whose religion is all in the almanac,—such is the diameter of the circle. Of the man who has Christ within him the hope of glory, but whose piety comprehends ingredients that do not spring out of the definition that speaks of worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth,—of him we predicate that he is a case of the most respectable species of this character. Of him who has no one definite thought in regard to doctrine or duty, but who complies with certain regulations that have reference to time, place, or gesture,—of him we affirm, that he belongs to the most insignificant and unmeaning class. Between these extremes, there is a long chain, consisting of a number of links. It may be alleged then of the whole family, that they place stress upon rites, varying from the fact of avowedly placing all their reliance upon them, up to that other point where they are heard declaring, that while they ascribe no saving influ-

ence to them, they observe them as "commanded duties." From the highest to the lowest, they are under the power of the thought, that there is virtue in places, seasons, and modes. Their system precludes them from escaping entirely from this influence. When asked if it be not possible to serve God without reference to such items, they shrink back from the proposition, and think badly of the piety of him who makes it. Because there are and have been some who have held true religion along with rites, from this it happens that so many conform to the rite, without laying hold on the religion.

If the Pharisee be so much more numerous and influential than the Sadducee, there is a sufficient reason for it. Men of genuine religion have been found in the one class, but they cannot occur in the other. Of the Pharisee without godliness—the character we are now considering—it is true, that a creed apprehended by the intellect merely, and ceremonies more or less numerous, constitute the whole of his religion. The proportions of these ingredients will depend on the strength or weakness of his mind. If very intelligent, doctrines will principally engross him; if wanting in faculty, rites will chiefly appeal to his sympathies. If in the first category, it will usually be necessary that he should suppose that he feels an interest in elements that all Christians allow to lie at the very centre of the faith. If in the latter condition, his blunt nature desires nothing more pungent or

mental than a few rites, which he practices over and over again, with complete confidence as to the importance of that in which he is engaged. The one man, being acute, believes that he is a Christian, because he knows the grounds and position of certain principles that undoubtedly enter into the composition of saving faith. The other thinks equally well of his own condition, because with precision, trouble and sacrifice, he complies with certain externals that he has learned to regard as religious and important. The presence of these elements in that system of religion which even godly men advocate, leads, by necessary consequence, to the circumstance, that the broadest and freest minds are unwilling to be mixed up with it. Disliking Christianity in the first instance, perhaps because of deeper reasons, it is an additional cause why they should eschew it, that it would seem to require of the devotee an attention to trifles. Offended by the system, because it asks the surrender of the whole heart, it is not to be wondered at if it incurs their displeasure anew when it comes before them appearing to attach importance to a font, an edifice, a day, to bread and wine, to laying on of hands, and to other ceremonies, which a person who has learned to think philosophically in some directions, cannot see to have any essential connexion with what he would imagine should conduce either to the glory of God or the elevation of human nature.

Owing to the existence of these accidents, that

make it requisite that he who would comply with the demands of the current Christianity must habitually do things that militate against the most moderate notions of common sense, the very highest talent often joins the ranks of the opposition. No doubt it is often tempted to conquer its repugnance. Ambition frequently induces it to hide such sentiments. When its object is to carry society along with it, it feels forcibly that the doctrine of the Sadducees do not tell on the multitude. On all questions where the mothers exert their influence, and where polls are counted, it perceives how important it is that it should have something in common with the multitude. If it does not make this compromise of principle in early life, it is very apt to do it about the time of middle age. If in youth it is willing to sit on the seat of the scorner, as it becomes older it feels the force of the appeal that invites it to go with the multitude that keep holy day. Hence, there is no want of instances in which high talent affects to espouse the cause of the Pharisee. In our days, in which the priest-led populace is more influential than it ever was before, and when the road to places of power and emolument lies through their ranks, the temptation is great for the man of talent to wear the badge of the Pharisee. On the other hand, to comply in this way is very foreign to the natural inclination of those who possess ability. To kneel three times a day, looking towards Mecca, is a sacrifice. A free soul would wish, occasion-

ally, at least, to vary the direction. To feel meagre at Lent, and jolly at Easter ; to be mundane till Saturday evening, and to step into devotion on Sunday morning,—this is worse than the army. In the measure that the character is strong, in the same degree does it recoil from such restrictions. When the boy Franklin, seeing his father say grace at dinner, put the question, Whether time might not be saved by performing the ceremony over the whole salting tub of beef? there broke out the manifestation of the free mind, that sifts forms, and is not reconciled to them merely because they are ancient and common.

The young freeman may be propitiated by proposing theology to him as a profession. His love of leisure, and learning, and influence over men, are employed as offsets to his hatred of restraint. In this way he is often coaxed into conformity, and being a person of talent, his case becomes a precedent, and a means of overcoming the scruples of youths of ability who succeed him. Making allowance for such cases, it remains true, notwithstanding that the vigorous understanding takes umbrage at the punctilios that enter into the system of the Pharisee. During the dark ages, this did not come out in a prominent way, partly because there were not at that time minds of the largest calibre; partly that the broadest that did exist were glad to take the ceremonies along with the attendant advantages, and to accept the career of a churchman—the only one that afforded them

exemption from material toils—even at the cost of accepting along with it matters of routine that they would not have been willing to swallow alone. Since the revival of letters, and since the time that instruction, law, and medicine, have offered careers independent of religion, men have had opportunity to evince the tendency of which we speak. Having the prospect of being able to live without putting on the robes and the hypocrisy of the ecclesiastic, they have frequently displayed their aversion for the fripperies of mechanical piety, in a very significant way. Nay, so strong is the sentiment, that even those who have been paid for being masters of ceremonies, have, in their literary compositions, taken vengeance on the formalities which they practised in the way of trade. Skelton, Rabelais, Swift, Sterne, and Sidney Smith, made obeisances on Sunday, but on Monday wrote what proved that their minds were never fairly enlisted in the service of that which they worked at for a livelihood.

A strong intellect can endure a mystery when it is well placed. It can bear to be told, hitherto thou shalt go, and no further, when there is some depth and dignity about those parts of the subject on which it is allowed to enter. But to be pulled up about nothing, to have to drop the voice where there is nothing really grave, this it cannot readily consent to. It has some regard for *time*, and does not choose that so important an element shall be consumed in that which yields no real return. It

has a relish for freedom, and does not like that its liberty should be cut in upon many hundred times in the course of the year.

Byron had a companion at college of great promise. Some friends once discovered the youth dining in an obscure tavern in London. The reason which he assigned for being found in such a place was, that he liked one of the rules, which was, that guests were permitted *to wear their hats* while eating their meals. Probably the subject of the story was a fop. In all likelihood this was one of his petty ways of acquiring cheap distinction. But it illustrates the principle. It exemplifies that desire which strong natures feel of being allowed to make inclination their rule. Especially do acute minds love to ascend up to causes. Hence they are impatient of mere forms, and feel a repugnance to fictions that can render no better account of themselves than that it has been so decreed.

We could understand a soul of the largest order to bow reverentially before the doctrine of the Trinity, or the creation of evil, to feel that there was nothing abject in such submission; nay, to be conscious that its pinions became stronger as it expatiated in atmospheres where it came in contact with the inscrutable. We could sympathise with it when it declared that it was to be expected that there should be limits in any communion that took place between the finite and the infinite,—and that it saw no reason why the barrier should not occur at the points above named. But there

is another class of objects that it does not willingly endure. To be pestered with a popinjay; to call this place sacred, and that day holy; to be compelled to consider that a ceremony imparts something to an edifice, and changes the quality of common water and port wine; to be reminded of religion every morning and evening, and several times in the course of the day, not by the stirrings of spirituality, but by the recurrence of breakfast and dinner, without speaking of the possibility of lunch and supper; to be constrained to adopt regulation, phrases, looks and manners,—in all this, there is an expenditure of time and effort, a sacrifice of feeling, a surrender of rationality, that the strong man does not willingly submit to. Hence, it may be laid down as one of the most leading characteristics of the Pharisaical system, that it repels mind. Intelligence may be early accustomed to its constrained pace, and mercenary interest may induce it to overcome or to hide its aversion, but there *is* a struggle. Further, the man of this class being punctilious, where there is no reason that he should be so, it naturally follows, that his feelings are blunt in matters of real consequence. We need all the surface of our conscience for impressions arising out of that which the divine law really declares to be sacred. If a considerable portion be occupied in attending to concerns that have no essential goodness belonging to them, there is not room for much that is truly lovely, honest, and of good report.

If an argument could be made out, to the effect, that human nature is larger than the moral law of God has any need of, it would not be cause of regret that it should occupy the spare room with other objects. But, when the contrary is so plainly the case, when it can so readily be proved that the commandment is exceeding broad, and that no man can, under any circumstances, fill up the measure of what it demands, then there is reason why we should deplore a state of things that engrosses the attention of men so as to hinder them from arriving at those moral attainments that would be possible under other circumstances.

Again, the Pharisee is not apt to be thorough. Being an empiric in the greatest of all affairs, that is a reason why he should be superficial in other directions. Imagining himself right, when he has not complied with the only condition that can place a man in the normal relation to his Maker, it is to be expected that he will commit similar errors at other points. Beginning his career with the egregious fallacy, which, stated in words, would amount to this—that a certain quantity of will-worship will produce regeneration, or will occasion a result that will equal it, his mind is already prepared to follow sophistical methods. Hence, if you point out to him anomalies of a very obvious sort; if you remark to him, that monarchy is government by accident; that aristocracy, as it exists in Britain, is a repetition of the same error; that protection is a taking from one class to give

to another; that indirect taxation is a dear method, and one that perpetuates corruption; that the punishment of death is legalized murder,—let such practical sophisms be pointed out, and he cannot feel their hollowness. He has accepted a more pernicious fallacy than any of these, and it cannot be wondered at, if he who can close with a lie, where immortality is involved, should not be rigidly close in his reasonings where less important questions are concerned. The system of the Pharisee implicates him in a mixed creed, consisting partly of doctrines, partly of ceremonies. Yet, he is in the habit of stating that he is delivered from the ceremonial law. He connects himself with a religion that contains many elements of that from which he pretends that he is freed. Such confusion of ideas, such imperfect analysis, cannot well remain in one corner of his nature, but must be likely to diffuse itself over his whole being. In that which engrosses a good deal of his time and effort, he confounds two different systems; and while he is a thrall, boasts of his liberty,—why should he be more accurate in any other department?

The Pharisee is accustomed to believe in a God, part of whose worship is a pomp or show. But if the eternal takes delight in the sensuous, the material must be valuable. Why then should it not be the object of man to surround himself with what appeals to the senses? And if so, are not the array of battles, the trappings of royalty, the

insignia of office, the badges of degree,—are not all these important enough affairs? Since something like them pleases the God, are we to be surprised that they should prove agreeable to his creatures. Some such explanation is necessary, in order to account for the immense importance which they who are accounted the magnates of intelligence, assign to architecture, sculpture, painting, and other arts that furnish objects which impose on the senses.

The world cannot be cleared of these costly and pernicious delusions, so long as the present theology stands. It consecrates them. They who believe in a God who surrounds himself with the specious, and enjoins that he should be adored with much visible and audible pomp, will be logical enough to carry out the idea into the arrangements of human life. What can be offered to Deity, Deity seeming to require it, may, with propriety, be highly esteemed by human beings. The first subject in Britain has passed forty years of life attending levees and reviews, and with extreme satisfaction to all beholders. A considerable part of all organs of intelligence is filled with accounts of matters of parade, connected with courts and nobility. Columns of the best conducted journals are crowded with minute descriptions of the costumes worn by monarchs and grandees on state and festal occasions. Literature and art vie together in giving their remarkable powers, that such seasons may receive the finest

emblazonment that talent can confer. Any person would be esteemed an arrogant pedant, who should pretend to show up what he might consider the absurdity of such doings. In recently perusing the Autobiography of that Goethe of whom Margaret Fuller says, that his mind comprehended the Universe, I see that the man, in retracing the events and impressions of early life, devotes pages to the description of what took place at Frankfort at the coronation of the Emperor Joseph. In the whole narrative of his life, I do not see that he meets any thing that he deems much more momentous than the middle-age pomps that took place on that occasion. He, the many-sided, the kunstler, the artist, the man of many sorrows, as he styles himself, feels that he is about a worthy employment when, after an interval of long years, he recounts with the minuteness of a herald or a court lackey, the heavy absurdities that were enacted at a season of parade.

In thirteen years, during which we have occupied a position favourable for observing what is passing in more stirring spheres, we have not perceived that any thing has more interested those races which are called the most advanced, than such things as the progresses and dressed balls of the Queen of England. No man could follow these tendencies up to their origin and expose their imbecility, until he had first decomposed what passes for religion. When he had proved that the Almighty had been misrepresented in being held

up to view as a God of ostentation, then, and not sooner, would it be possible for him to rectify the opinions and practices of men. The abettor of this system has a low standard in morals. Standing in such a relation to Deity as that his habitual feeling is—God, I thank thee that I am not as other men; connected with a creed of such a very mundane character as that he feels that he complies with all that it exacts, the basis of his sentiments is complacency. No celestial standard confronts him, that keeps him stretched on the ground; no transcendental longings invade his comfort, inviting him to imitate God “grace for grace.” His deity is a convenient commercial personage, who accepts a composition, and presents himself in no shape that arouses and awes.

The Pharisee, being an empiric, has no perception that any motion which he and his fellows experience, is merely circular. Having no determinate close to the prospect, he is blind to the fact, that there is no real progress in his sect. While nothing more is said around him, than was known in the time of Constantine, he does not feel that this contains any censure of his method. When the fact is obtruded upon him, so that he cannot avoid noticing it, he turns it into subject of exultation. In one of the late rotary movements that took place in one of the sects, an Ode was written to express this feeling of satisfaction at being merely a continuation of what had been, each stanza of which ended thus—

"Just as we came from Westminster
Two hundred years ago."

He sends missions to the heathen that do not convert, and boasts of the good he is doing. He sees all things, in the communities to which he belongs, continuing as they were; and because there are formal changes, supposes that a great work is going on. Because men are dying off; because a preacher now and then changes his sphere; because a new ecclesiastical edifice rises from time to time; because the sacramental tables, which used to be disposed crossways, are now arranged longitudinally,—for reasons of this sort, he supposes himself to be living in the midst of brisk movement.

The Pharisee is aggressive. Not profound. Accustomed from childhood to his sophisms and his ceremonies, the deception becomes tolerably complete. Deluded by the rites which keep him performing attitudes many times every day, he is furnished with zeal enough to play the assailant upon anything that opposes. God, in person, approaching him in immaculate virtue, but without the prescribed quantity of ceremonial, would appear to him a very ignoble being. While he does not enter the kingdom of heaven himself, he is very energetic, and, as he imagines, very pious, in labouring to hinder any one else from passing through the celestial gates. Although he has been doing these things on a vast scale, for nineteen centuries, he is still unsuspected and unexposed,

and were we not forewarned by Divine prophecy, the aspect of the world would allow the supposition that he might last for ever.

II. The SADDUCEE. Scripture thus defines him: "The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both." It has been usual to refer to the members of this class as if they were at the acme of possible badness. They have supplied the followers of the other sect with a convenient target, at which to discharge the arrows of their seemingly righteous indignation. When they are beheld, with specious zeal and high-sounding wrath, inviting the world to look on, and to remark how superlatively wicked are those whom they attack, it is a natural enough consequence for men to arrive at, that the assailed must be very bad, and that the other party must be far removed from the faults which they impugn.

As Popery has long been a commodious lay figure for the Protestant to maul; as, in denouncing it he turns attention away from himself, and procures a reputation for singular purity of tenet and practice,—so is it in this instance. There are few persons whose blood has not run cold at the maternal and clerical descriptions with which they have been plied in childhood, having reference to the singular wickedness of the infidel. They who have received what is called a good and pious education, must remember, as one of the special ingredients, the horrors with which they were

taught to think of Voltaire or Gibbon. They learned to consider that all evil was comprised in the doctrines of such persons. If at a later period, they passed over to the territory of such opinions, it was in despite of as strong prejudices as they had ever cherished.

The tenets of the Pharisee are of such an order as to admit of his being a converted man. In part, they are, or may be, orthodox. He is to be found existing in connexion with systems, portions of which are the mind of the Spirit, and will endure for ever. He lives under the shadow of the Trinitarian and Calvinistic vine and fig tree, quite as commonly as under that of the Arminian and Arian. It may even be alleged of him that he exists more peculiarly under the former auspices. The Sadducee, on the contrary, is not correct in form. His theology is negation. He denies the popular creed. There is no case then, in which he is found among the children of God. This much we concede to his antagonists. Every believer, from Pentecost down to this hour, has belonged to the Pharisees, in the degree that he has thought and acted in concert with them in regard to rites. But in all that time there has been no real convert to the Christian system who has stood on the ground of the Sadducee; because, to do so, infers that you entertain ideas that are not in conformity with those modes of thinking which the Creator of all things has declared to lie at the

foundation of the creed necessary to the formation of the elect and accepted character.

In all that we allege of these two characters, we wish it to be understood then that we never forget this circumstance—that the one may be a believer, and the other cannot. The one, holding that form of sound words which, under any conditions, is the intellectual basis of Christianity, may, and occasionally does realize that state of heart which is the evangelical consequence. The Sadducee, wanting the geometry of religion, cannot, so long as he adheres to his proper tenets, attain to that frame of spirit which is holy and accepted in the beloved. If, all the while that this admission is made, it be nevertheless true, that the *practical* difference between the two men is so small, that they have moved on abreast through all the transactions of society, without the one perceptibly gaining on the other, then the conclusion comes out, that *objectively* it has not mattered much, as yet, whether a man has belonged to God or the devil.

To the Sadducee, the enjoyment of leisure, freedom, and the play of his own thoughts, are the strongest of all motives. The Pharisee holds *place*, and direct influence, in higher estimation. The one prefers the life that Voltaire or Gibbon led; the other would rather have the position of Bacon or bishop Butler. The one knows no deeper satisfaction than perhaps, unnoticed, to pursue trains of thought that will conduct to some deep, broad system, that will make his name familiar to pos-

terity; the other does not concern himself about such remote consequences, but endeavours to make sure of immediate fame and power. The one often exhibits a remarkable chivalrousness of character that braves poverty and other present and severe distresses, that he may reach that haven of speculation that dazzles his view beyond all other contingencies: the other discovers his ability in exacting of fate, that he should mount on the crest of the wave, and that, happen what may, he should never be hidden from observation. The mind which can forego immediate effects, which can face opposition, and endure neglect, is psychologically stronger than the other, that must bring its wares immediately into the market. With few exceptions, the persons who, since the Reformation, have originated remarkable conceptions, have not been orthodox, and certainly have not concurred in that way of religion which we are wont to name evangelical.

Here, it is fit that we should remark that the Sadducee is guilty of fraudulent conduct when he represents himself as *self-made*. In childhood he has been taught the tenets of the commonly received Christianity. At every stage of life, he comes in contact with books and persons that reflect orthodox opinions. To speak of himself as if he had not been subjected to such influences, and as if he were the spontaneous growth of nature, may be fantastic, but it is certainly not just. The attempt which a man makes, under such circumstances, to

separate himself from the events of his career, may illustrate very well the fallacies into which even intellectual persons will fall, but proves anything but sanity of mind. He who pretends to effect this mental divorce, is not what he affects to be. He is not the wondrous child of nature, wiser and more moral than those holding an orthodox creed. He is the product of what is currently known and believed in religion, who, arrived at ripe years, has forsaken the school in which he was educated, but who, in constructing a system, makes use of Revelation and the writers upon it, as Mahomet availed himself of the bible when he composed the Koran. A person sprung from Christian parents, and brought up where scriptural doctrines are known and discussed, may as rationally pretend to have been unaffected by these influences, as the native of France or England may lay claim to have grown to man's estate without aid from the atmosphere of the country where he lives.

The modes in which the Sadducee manifests his disbelief of revealed religion, are various. He asserts, that the Evangelists give contradictory accounts; that there are discrepancies in other parts; that there are statements at variance with geography or civil history. He fastens on some passages as sanctioning immorality; on others, as puerile or absurd. The mysteries are what ought not to have occurred in a message from God. It ought to have been as patent to the understanding of men as are the phenomena of the natural world.

To create evil, and then condemn creatures for falling into it; to decree events, and then deal with those under the decree as if they were free and responsible; to ordain that a large part of mankind should be lost for ever, and then lay claim to infinite love; to give out that Deity is three, and yet one,—these descriptions are too irreconcilable to be received as part of a divine communication. Quite as often the attack is less direct. The stratification of the globe is enquired into, and it is ascertained, as the geologist alleges, that a much longer time was requisite to produce the phenomena, than the Mosaic account would allow. The procedure of the planetary regions is looked into, and it is pretended that these great orbs could have initiated their own structure and motions. The arrangements of zoological nature are examined, and it is affirmed that man, instead of issuing immediately from the workshop of Deity, as has been alleged, is a result that has arisen by gradual development from such low types of existence as the angle-worm. Or the subject is *ethnologically* considered; in which case, perhaps the principle is imposed that the world is peopled by races that had not a common origin, but that are each the primary denizens of the climates in which they are found. Or the human brain is considered from the side of phrenology, and the circumstance of an inherent structure is used as a reason why it cannot be designed, as revelation would pretend, that the mind should be altered by super-

nal influence. Or, it is stated that certain ideas, such as time, eternity, Deity, cause, &c., are instinctive, and therefore are not the result of tuition and experience, by which means a system of nature is erected, that is in reality diametrically opposed to revelation. Or, without any palpable basis of argument, it is thought poetical, and therefore it must be correct, to pervade all creation with Divinity; He resides in all that has any being,—imparts to the flower its fragrance,—to the bird its tuneful note,—to each intelligent soul its peculiar character. Religion lies, not in finding a lost God,—not in being reconciled to an offended God,—not in escaping from the domain of perdition to that of holiness,—but in drawing forth what is already in every one. This last imaginative, and very complacent form of unbelief, does not find it necessary to abrogate revelation; it is not so coarse and violent: like Bayley's butterfly, it kisses all buds that are pretty and sweet: like Latin Universalism, it does not mind how many deities it admits into its Pantheon: it is not so hard as to say any thing bad of the Bible; it is a good book, making allowance for many errors, characteristic of the people or times from which it emerged; it is as good, perhaps better, than the reveries of Plato, the systems of Confucius or Mahomet.

This last is the least rigid, and perhaps the most popular of all the styles of unbelief. Goethe has done the most to give it vogue. It has received poetical exposition in Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley,

Tennyson : it has been commended by the talents of Carlyle, Emerson, and Margaret Fuller. Cuckoo like, it is willing to hatch in nests already built : by not insisting on destroying any previous structure, it provokes little hostility : addressing itself to those who are orthodox on mechanical principles, not interfering with their ordinances, the only thing which they do understand, it steals pleasantly in among them, saying, doggie, doggie, poor doggie ; it makes acquaintance with the stupid pug-nosed mastiff brute, and gets him to bark for it.

It has never been frankly admitted, as would have been becoming on the part of those who are conscious that they have an honest cause, that the Sadducee leads as good a life as his antagonist. What a rectified kind of Christianity shall do for men in the way of intelligence and holiness remains to be seen. We refuse to yield to any one in lofty anticipations of the result to which it will infallibly conduct. In the mean time, there is no practical difference between the two characters : the one class may resort to speculative distinctions, —they may inform us that the children of light are among them,—they may bring up the scripture, “ Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect?” Hypothesis is on their side ; visible facts are against them. They whom they would wish to represent as fiends, pay their taxes and discharge the relative duties about as well as their assailants.

It may be comfortable to the Pharisee, within the precincts of his inane and very heartless coterie, to prove that he is the subject of indefectible grace: the letter-carrier and the milkman cannot be expected to take cognizance of this very metaphysical circumstance; yet they are prepared to depone, that their customer, the Sadducee, is as prompt in his payments as any of his neighbours. It is really too bad that we should be mentioning these things for the first time; that we should be giving them forth as if they were revelations from a higher sphere. It is too abominable that the Pharisee should have been permitted to lie uncontradicted,—should have been suffered to describe his adversary as a monster of iniquity: And then, of course, when he commenced the controversy so, he was forced to have recourse to other lies, most dishonouring to God and truth. That avowed infidelity stood its ground, he was compelled to refer to “the mysterious providence” of God, to disown causation in religion; and instead of saying, the Sadducee flourishes, because, for all practical purposes, he is as good as I; to cast a most unworthy cloud over the divine methods.

It cannot be expected that religion should clothe itself with strength and beauty until this egregious falsehood is retracted, until the science of God is vindicated, until religion is plainly set forth as an adaptation of means to ends, until the believer shall desist from valuing himself upon mere doctrines and sentiments, until he shall be fully con-

vinced that he must be all round discernibly superior to the man without faith.

When we attempt to be precise as to the generic characters of the Pharisee and the Sadducee, it is perhaps not unfair, on the whole, to say, that the former inclines to the cool, and the latter to the hot vices. The one looks leniently at the ecclesiastical sins, which, while they often argue the greatest degree of badness, do not materially hinder a prosperous career; the other is often more disposed to gratify strong passion, without close regard to its commercial consequences. Mr. Pusey, or the Archbishop of Dublin, will answer as examples of the one family; Voltaire, or Shelley, of the other. Among the nations, Britain is the best representative of the Pharisee; France of the Sadducee. A person of the most ardent genius will be apt to espouse the side of the Sadducee, because he is left untrammelled as to the choice of his words, the arrangement of his countenance, and the disposal of his time. For the same reason, in the heat of youth, a person who does not embrace true religion, will take this side, and will not turn the conformist until about that point of life at which Shakspeare represents the individual as becoming

“ the Justice

In fair round belly, with good capon lined,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut.”

The person who, with little regard to the indulgence of feeling, with small care for abstract truth,

and the development of personal character, has a keen hungry wish for aggrandisement, he will at once adopt the side of the Pharisee, veering to each breeze, adapting himself to all shapes, sacrificing the inward to the outward life, he will attain what is called success, because he has placed himself in such an attitude as suits the majority of society.

The literal history of Jesus Christ seems to represent him as done to death by the combination of these two characters. Herod and Pontius Pilate compound their differences in the judgment hall, where Jesus is given over to his enemies. Where two influences concur to perpetrate the same foul deed, there is not much room for *moral* distinctions. The degree of difference that can be fairly specified is, that the Pharisee is the active principle in the slaying of Jesus, the Sadducee being distinguished by indifference; the one impelled by carnal zeal, eagerly demands that the Lord of glory should be sacrificed; the other, intelligent but heartless, sees that there is no cause of offence in the reputed criminal, yet surrenders him because resistance was too much for its Epicurean indifference.

The two influences have fought with considerable asperity since the Reformation; the Sadducee often having the talent with him; the Pharisee always sure of the women and the rabble. If, as many things would seem to declare, they have settled their differences; if, both together, they

have agreed to make away with the august personage who knows them both and defies their malice, we may expect by these tokens that we are on the verge of a new moral era. At this second resurrection a new character will emerge,—a man who feels that he is sent out spiritually to baptize his brethren,—to whom the career of religion will be causation and agency at every step; who, possessing more zeal than the Pharisee ever felt, more talent and frankness than have ever distinguished the Sadducee, will be free from the ceremonies of the one, the carelessness of the other, and communicating freely and fully with the eternal, shall thereby realize the prediction of Emanuel, “And greater works than these shall ye do because I go unto my Father.”

LECTURE III.

THAT TRUE RELIGION IS DESIGNED AND CALCULATED TO
RENDER MAN INTELLECTUALLY EMINENT.

THE world has seen without astonishment, nineteen centuries roll past without the Christian ever coming forward as the ruler among men. Fifty or sixty generations have lived and died, and in all that time no man of God has appeared who has attained to the degree of faculty that has been shown by those who had not the Spirit.

We admit that the Christian religion has had a share, and a close one, with *all* the talent that has been displayed on the earth. Whether they point our view to Egypt, India, China or Greece, to Rome, to the times of Leo X., Louis XIV., Queen Elizabeth, Anne, or George IV., we not merely recognise, but contend for the principle, that the presence of Revelation, in some shape or other, accounts for the phenomena. Nay, so clear are we in regard to the doctrine, that we accept its converse with equal willingness, and are prepared to defend the position, that in any age, in any part of the earth, intelligence has been low, in the ratio

that the amount of revealed knowledge was minute that was present in that time and country. Still, this does not interfere with the remark which we made at the outset, that the real convert to religion has not reached the highest eminence.

The two things may consist, for anything that we see to the contrary—that the presence of the divine message has stimulated intelligence in the general, and that they have not received the strongest impulse in the way of faculty who have savingly believed in that message. The reason why the two may agree is, that it is possible to conceive that true religion might be embraced in such a very strange way as not to exert those good effects upon mind that it would produce under other circumstances. This, which may be conceived, may also be shown to be the fact. Owing to a corrupted version, begun by the Apostles, and quickly prolonged into a whole system of carnalities, the human race has never yet been confronted by that method which the Most High has designed for the greatest benefit to his creatures.

Whether it be that this creed, being strangely imbecile, inconsistent and unpleasant, is accepted by those only in whom intellect holds a very minor place; or whether it be, that when received, it has a pernicious effect upon powers already in being,—certain it is, that it has not been held, in any one instance, by those that we are in the habit of regarding as the highest examples of intellec-

tual power. He who adopts this system takes up, in the first place, a great *heterogeneous* mass of doctrines and ceremonies, and perhaps it requires that the mind should be loose, that cordially embraces that which is made up of such dissimilar parts. He joins himself to a system which tells him to work and pray hard, and when he has done so, steps in with its false view of "Paul may plant and Apollos may water," and filches from him the result, or any share in it. Could the very highest understanding be expected to devote its energies to that which called it to be an agent, and then came in with a suspending clause, to the effect, that there is no necessary connexion between means and ends? Is it strange if the strong character which loves, above all things, to be made aware that it is effecting something, should have felt itself repelled from such a theory? It may not have dissected its aversion,—it may not have been conscious of the motives that secretly swayed it,—it may not have been able to state the grounds of its dislike in any argumentative shape, but that does not hinder but that it may have felt as we suppose.

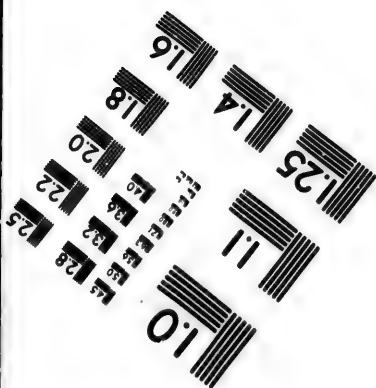
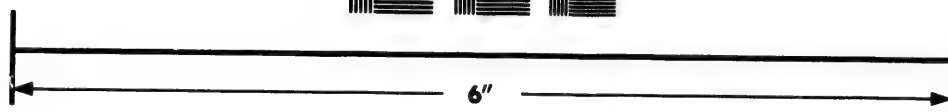
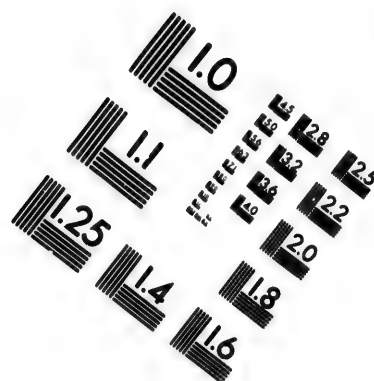
Again: the person who received this theology was not only expected to acquiesce in mysteries, but to take them, they being seldom held up to his mind as such. It was never said to him in an honest and downright manner, here are elements that, to the human mind, contain *contradictions*. A broad statement of this sort might have propi-

tiated by its frankness. On the contrary, he was told that the propositions involved in any of these mysteries, are not inconsistent. He was entertained with theological word-play that, if it meant anything, meant this—that such a scripture as “these three are one,” did not contain ideas that to man’s intelligence are incompatible.

Further: the proselyte to that system that has saved the few believers that the world has seen, was taught to consider that he was forbidden to judge. Really to forbid this, is to exclude mental life. They who, pretending to hold this dogma, have made any advances in knowledge have done so in despite of their theory. It has been by an offence against reasoning in the first place that they have overleaped the barriers that debarred them from all progress. This fallacy, in excluding man from the scrutiny of his neighbour, requires him to cultivate moral science, without giving him the means of doing so. It commands him to become an anatomist, yet forbids him to dissect the human body. In this one circumstance, there is enough to explain why the so-called scheme of salvation should not attract the sympathies of the aristocrats of mind.

Again: the doctrine inculcated so carefully, that the spiritual life is of such a nature as that its subject is not called upon to feel sure that the principle is within him; this, with the effects it induces, is by no means inviting. The weakest and most emotional, flutter round a system that is as indefi-





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nite as themselves. The strong thinker, without perhaps analyzing the cause of his distaste, is repelled by a theory so unspecious in itself, so contemptible in its results.

Thus, a code which mixes up the doctrinal with the symbolic,—which summons to effort, and refuses to admit, or at least to define, the province of human agency,—which does not allow you to examine your fellow-being, and does not permit you to entertain definite ideas of your own condition,—which makes over all high promises to the apostolic period,—which believes in a better state of the world, but proposes to reach it by a personal advent of the Redeemer,—which is confronted by persons having no faith, and pretending to none, who yet surpass its proselytes in good works: this was not fitted to allure intelligence. He who was already strong in faculty could not consent that his spirit should bow down in acquiescence to a system so mean and inconsistent. To confess the presence of Deity in such a plan, was an admission beyond what his feelings could stretch. He who might perhaps have become powerful as a thinker, if he embraced this system in early life, was by it so fettered that his mind was never enabled to expand. It could attract intellect but in one of these two ways. If it addressed itself to it when full grown, it found it indisposed to believe and to put forth energy in its behalf. If it caught it young, its influence was

such as to prevent it from ever attaining to full growth.

We are not aware that the advocates of evangelical religion have ever been struck by the circumstance to which we allude. There are many reasons why they are not apt to see it. Drawing the multitude around them by their ordinances,—imagining that it is attracted by the power of religion, and feeling comfortable from the presence of numbers, they see no cause why they should occupy themselves with the metaphysical and abstract. Accustomed to consider that in religion there is no appreciable causation, it would scarcely seem an objection to the most of them, that the believers whom the church has already reared have been, in general, of moderate or inferior intelligence. They would answer, that God was all the more glorified if the affairs of his church were conducted by those who could not be supposed capable, of themselves, of effecting much. In the habit of taking, in the letter, those scriptures that speak of the ordaining strength “out of the mouth of babes and sucklings,” if they are at all pressed by any one who would seek to show them up as intellectually insignificant, they have recourse to these texts—declare that their weakness is a prophesied event, and out of what is really degrading, contrive to extract matter for self-gratulation.

When in their most ambitious moods, and anxious to make out a case in favour of Christianity,

they then retract principles which they had been in the habit of imposing before. According to their previous definitions, no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost; and in this they are unquestionably right. Agreeably to their regular creed, a man cannot be saved unless he hold certain specified views in regard to the Trinity, and in this too they are undoubtedly correct. But when the object is a war with the sceptical assailant, then all this is put aside for the time. Every person is then appealed to, who did not actually publish definite objections to the whole Christian system. Although the career of Bacon was infamous enough to make it plain that he was not taught of the Spirit, his renowned name is held up as a proof to the infidel and the world that the loftiest minds have bowed down before the gospel of Jesus Christ. Although Taylor, Barrow, Swift, Stillingfleet, Warburton, Butler, Paley and Horsley, with Campbell, Macknight, Beattie and Blair, were Arminians in sentiment, and in any case were not of the evangelical school,—and when regarded from a different point of view, would be excluded,—when controversy with the sceptic is the matter on hand, the genius and learning of these persons are referred to as if they fell within the pale of the faith. Although Ernesti, Jacobi, Michaelis, Neander, and other erudite Germans, who have written on the language of the bible, or the history of the church, have not been of the class that we are in the habit of terming converted

men, they are brought in as soldiers of the Redeemer when the object is to affirm how strong are the evidences of true religion, and how eminent have been the talents of those who have defended it. Locke, Newton and Milton are high names, in point of ability, but they did not believe in the divinity of the Saviour: Rejecting that cardinal opinion, they had no right to be esteemed Christians. Yet, when a controversy is waged with the infidel, it is thought quite fair to count them as friends. They did not deny Revelation. They wrote about it; and although the manner in which they did this was not one that the Spirit of Truth would sanction, they are to be viewed as partisans. Whenever the call was for genius, the defender of religion has gone out and found it in the ranks of what are really enemies of the truth. His theory allowing him to do this, he has been able to look with a complacent eye over creation, and to feel that he was the member of a society that had produced the most distinguished men. When I am writing for the Evangelical Magazine, a Papist is a follower of the beast—a citizen of Babylon the mother of harlots: When I am fighting for the Christian system, Bossuet and Fenelon are among the names that I lay great stress on. When I define an orthodox creed; in other words, that which is requisite for salvation, I censure the tenets of the Arian and the Arminian: When I proclaim to mankind the prodigies of intelligence that have belonged to the church of Christ, I make

no scruple to go outside of my former definitions and adduce the examples of persons, who, if I was correct before, have neither part nor lot in the matter.

Before the discussion could be carried on with advantage, this error would require to be rectified. Certain ideas are essential to the Christian, and these must be held in a particular manner: let it be stated what is the amount of this: our believer being defined, it is legitimate, when we desire proofs of the intellectual influence of the gospel, to go in this one specified direction, and in no other. If, confining ourselves to that which we had concluded to be the true church, we find ourselves in the society of minute characters, that is a reason why we should ask how it happens that it is so; it is not a cause why, forgetting our premises, we should proceed to adduce instances of Christian genius from the ranks of those who had not faith.

Acting in this precise manner, the believer would arrive at a conclusion that he could not otherwise reach; he would see the truth that we stated at the outset, that talent has indubitably belonged to the other side of the house. This would lead him to propose the question, whether it had been so from a moral necessity, or whether it had arisen out of *accidental* causes. Laying hold, of course, of the latter alternative; entertaining the idea that it was a vitiated Christianity that had given the glory to the enemy, his next enquiry would be, what are the spurious ingredients? This point

arrived at, and enquiries set on foot that certainly have not been agitated in the whole former history of the church, results such as this would come out. The moral world is the theatre of exact causation. But the intelligence has been on the side of Satan, in a very vast degree : it must therefore be considered, that in the ratio that it is so, in that very degree is the empire of the world really in his hands. But if this be so, the friends of religion must change the state of things. This they must do by rejecting from their system any foreign elements; by putting all its tenets on a thoroughly scriptural footing, and by examining what is wanting, in order to give it that completeness that will render it on every side commensurate with that plan that calls itself the perfect law of God,—that code which speaks of itself as an engine that shall conquer every opponent. Of all conceivable ideas that could be put forth, there is no one more important than this, that God and the devil have, after a sort, contended since the beginning of time, and that the intellect, as yet, has been chiefly on the side of the bad spirit. If this be the case, it is of great consequence that it should be seen and recognized; if it be true, it is the height of degradation and wicked larceny to go to Satan's kingdom for examples of the genius that has co-existed with saving knowledge.

One of the Patriarchs who outwitted his worldly brother was for a time called Jacob, which means he that supplants or undermines. At a later

period, after he had wrestled with the angel, his name was changed into Israel, a prince with God. We do not consider this simply as an analogous circumstance: it is, in our view, more than that; it is a divinely instituted type of the truth that we are now propounding. Forming our ideas of the intended method of divinity from his written word, the conclusion is, that he is to expel evil from the earth by means of spirit. That this is, in a sense, identical with mind, is apparent from the invitation to the believer—"Let that *mind* be in you which was also in Christ Jesus;" and from the assertion of an apostle—"We have the mind of Christ." But if God designs to regenerate the earth by means of spirit, he is not to do so by means of *weak* spirit. That he might have arranged it so as that the inferior mind should conquer the superior, we are willing to suppose possible; but our business is to determine what method he *has* chosen to adopt; not to form curious and ingenious hypotheses as to what ways he might have pursued.

But, if God in his record has declared that he will drive Satan from the earth by spirit; if, in order to this, he invites the Christian, who is to *carry* that spirit, to "be filled" with it, to be strong, to covet earnestly the best gifts, to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, the conclusion must be, if the Christian has been thoroughly unsuccessful in his campaign, that he cannot have exerted the powers that were placed at his disposal.

If I disjoin means from ends ; if I deny that man is intended to be an agent in disseminating the truth ; if I speak or think so loosely of the philosophy of things as would imply that one method is as good as any other ; or, if I lean upon some instrumentality that is quite independent of any thing human, in that case, I cannot discern that posture of affairs to which I have adverted above. On the other hand, if I believe God when he says of Zion, the church, "All my springs are in thee;" if I credit his word, where it tells me in so many instances, of the great powers assigned to his people, and the vast effects which they will eventually produce, then I am arrested by the wondrous circumstance that, under the providence of that same God who has promised such results, events have been so long allowed to follow such a course as would appear to intimate that the ruler of the universe had not power over the kingdom of evil.

Contrasting what has been with what is to be, the enquirer is struck by the vast interval between what the church has been doing, and that which it is yet to accomplish : bearing in mind that the result is to be effected by the development of that which has been complete, and in the hands of the church since the days of the apostles, he considers it a question of exact criticism to decide, Wherein have we hitherto misrepresented the word of God ? in what extent can ampler powers, that is to say, wiser thoughts, be evolved from it ?

As is the interval between the church of the

present time, groaning under Egyptian servitude, carried away into Babylonish confusion and the establishment in the latter days; such is the distance between the system that now obtains and that which is to exist hereafter. But that interval is enormous, therefore the enquirer infers, that *equally* great are the reforms that must be introduced into theology. But if the distance between religion as it is, and as it shall become, is exactly measurable by the present and the future circumstances of the church, and if it be so vast that up to this time it has been usual to believe that the change was to be effected by agencies foreign to any thing human, then it is not hard to solve the problem proposed above; it is not difficult to understand how in the mean time the believer should be the intellectual inferior of Satan's agent. Estimating the imperfection of present theological ideas by the distance between the church in Babylon and the church triumphant, there is all that difference to explain the circumstance to which we have referred, and there is all that interval to be filled up by the speculative and practical efforts of those believers who unitedly are to produce the change.

Given the space between the Jews in captivity, the scorn of those that spoiled them, and the same people, restored and rebuilding their city and temple; assuming this, as the specified size of the alterations that are to occur in theology, the theorist feels that enough is admitted. This amount

of concession enables him to say, I can account for the fact that the believer looks puny alongside of his worldly antagonist. The one is doing his best, because he is taxing to the utmost the powers of the bad spirit on whom he depends. The other is at the lowest point at which Christianity can exist, and is illustrating the prophecy which declares that that day cannot come except there come a *falling away* first.

It is not, then, a sufficient answer to our hypothesis to say that the Christian has not as yet been eminent for intelligence. This reply, we say, does not stand in our way. If we can show that religion has been in an *abnormal* state during all the time that it has induced this low form of mind, we have put in a rejoinder that cannot be got rid of.

Now the following elements that we distinctly specify, have, we believe, been sufficient to vitiate the gospel: The presence of symbols which have appealed to the carnality of human nature, have drawn men round the preaching stations, and caused the teachers to imagine that they were attracted by the love of divine truth: The opinion, that it is unlawful to scrutinize motives, and the other, that we are not called upon to feel sure of our personal interest in religion: The notion, that man has no assignable share in converting sinners, and that it is unfit to pretend to define what is the agency employed: The doctrine, that the way of the Spirit is that, which to suppose lawless, argues

true piety, and the other, that the extraordinary promises spoken by Jesus were restricted to the apostles: The dogma, that the triumphant state of the church was to come, not from development, but by shifting the scenery; not by man doing better with religion, but by some new influence coming in with which he had no share: The idea continually entertained that the doctrine of revelation is exhausted, and that no fresh energies can be elicited from it.

These views must have had one of two effects: Either they could invite none but intellects of second-rate vigour, or any that were originally of higher quality they must turn into that complexion. In these opinions—and they are not all, and perhaps not even the worst—there is imperfect analysis, such as an intelligence of the first order could not be guilty of in any subject where it bestowed all its energies.

We refuse then to have recourse to any mystery, in order to solve this question; but, in a distinct manner, enunciate the statement, that such tenets as those which we have named, are quite sufficient to explain all,—that they could have emanated only from little men, or those who did not give their talents to the subject of theology,—that they could have produced only converts small, like themselves,—and that perhaps the followers of Satan have, on the whole, been regulated by views that hung better together, and that, practically

speaking, were more calculated to produce intelligent and salubrious results.

It is a conception that belongs to the order of possibilities, that during the low state of religion Satan's theology may have been mentally preferable to that followed by the "holy nation."

We proceed to treat our subject more directly, by assigning specific reasons why the believer should be eminent in intellect.

I. The first reason that we assign is the *parentage* of faith. It is of celestial origin in a degree that probably has never been allowed for. There are statements in the bible, that, considered in their high theory, put the earth and its inhabitants in the power of the believer. Passages of this sort have been understood to be figurative, or have been made over to the apostles. In the course of our experience, we have met none that have taken them in their obvious sense.

Our acquaintances have either been worldly professors, that ruled themselves by a commentary and other authorities, or they have been sentimental religionists that evinced their piety in the way of quoting those scriptures that discourse especially of the Divine character. These last, the representatives of what belief there is in the world, seem usually to consider that one of the most holy sentiments which they can utter is something relating to the degradation of human nature. They are, in their own estimation, in the most seemly state of mind when they are retailing

Scriptures that depict men in their most contemptible aspect. Yet why should they dwell on these texts? If they portray man as he is in consequence of the fall, why should they, who give out that they are risen with Christ, move round an orbit that belongs properly to those who are not regenerate? These considerations do not occur to them: no stronger sign do they deem that they can afford of piety, than by declaring that man can do nothing: never do they dream of comparing themselves with what is to be done, and of contemplating the truth that all the distance which intervenes between the present, and the full glory of the latter day, is to be travelled over by the efforts of mortals; to them such an idea would appear to be a prodigious combination of arrogance and impiety.

In the extent that they would not take in such a thought; in that degree, is the conception of what may be done, below the authorized standard. The believers at present on the earth are the expression of all the religion that in the meantime can be brought into operation to affect the destinies of man: but it does not occur to any of them to speculate upon a system different from what is: it does not even occur to any of them to consider that agency has any assignable connexion with future results: some of them, probably, are barely aware that there is to be a moral era of peculiar excellence: the rest, in devising how it is to be come at, would be quite contented to say that it

would happen when agreeable to God,—that he could bring it about in his own good time. Indeed, so far are these emotional beings from connecting themselves with any such realizations, that one of their tea-table pastimes consists in telling one another how easily God can compass ends without any concurrence on the part of the creature. They could not be induced to think that a good result that was to be come at by human endeavour. Tell them of a millennium that comes suddenly down upon the earth, and you inform them of what they would allow to be a holy event. Apprise them of a golden age to be attained by putting this to that—by man, through the spirit, developing the world, and you fail to attract their sympathy. Such literalists are they that they cannot see that an event is owing to God merely because he suggests every word and deed that accomplishes it: In order to perceive that he does it, he must be exhibited to them physically, mounted on a car, or riding on the whirlwind. Men of this cast—and the teachers of religion are, in the best cases, nothing superior to this—do not entertain those vast declarations that promise to make the creature the intimate associate of his Maker. One passage says, “He giveth not the Spirit by measure;” another, that “he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit:” A branch of Christ’s vine, a stone of his mystical temple, a member of his body, are among the illustrations of the promised connexion. “As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that

they also may be one in us," is an expression of the nearness of intimacy that is permitted between the finite and the Infinite. "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you:" Here the Saviour makes a clean breast, and informs his disciples that nothing of all that the Almighty has revealed to him is kept back from them. In one place, believers are told that whatever things they ask, in Christ's name, God will grant their request,—that if any two of them be agreed, their prayer will be answered. What they bind on earth, is bound in heaven: what they loose on earth, is loosed in heaven.

When the tokens are enumerated that shall accompany faith, things are mentioned that denote the presence of preternatural energy. They shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

The Lord Jesus, in the course of his mission, put forth his hands upon the various kingdoms of nature, and showed himself able to reverse or suspend established laws wherever he exerted his influence. Yet this irresistible being said to his disciples, "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto my Father." In one of his last addresses, he delivered himself to this effect: "All

power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye *therefore* and teach all nations, baptizing them." The spirit that dwells in the believer is spoken of as a spirit that searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. In speaking of that Trinity that presides over the church, the remark occurs "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The connexion between the believer and his God is thus stated: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." So high and mysterious is the nature that is imparted to him, that while it is declared that he judgeth all things, it is added, "yet he himself is judged of no man." The convert is spoken of as the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in him; as having Christ in him, the hope of glory; as being the habitation of God through the spirit; as desiring to be clothed upon with his house that is from heaven; as being the epistle of the Holy Ghost; as having his conversation in heaven; as being already come to Mount Zion, and to God the judge of all. In a word, to say in respect of the believer, that a connexion of the most intimate nature between him and God is offered, is to give a brief unvarnished report of what really is.

Scripture does not offer to make him God, but it offers him the next thing to that. That Deity should dwell in him, should promote him to divine functions, should enable him to do works even less akin to the ordinary than the miracles

which Jesus wrought. It is surely not unphilosophical to conclude that if the intimacy be thus close, thus potential in its consequences, the effect must be mental as well as moral. Indeed, the invitation "let that *mind* be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," conveys this much. And, in fact, it may be asked, how is the believer to perform works that transcend even those of the Saviour, and far exceed the bounds of the natural;—how is he to accomplish this, save by intelligence of a commensurate sort?

We have heard, indeed, of arts called magic, where preternatural effects were accomplished by mechanical means, by strange concoctions, by the uttering of mysterious sentences and names. Regarding the economy of the kingdom of God as carried on by mental processes,—to be told of supernatural works that are to be done, is, in other words, to be apprised of the agency of proportionate intelligence.

God, then, according to the theory of the gospel, inhabits the convert, and does so in a sense so real and strenuous, as to render him capable of acts that change the posture of the moral world. In other instances, where a man performs an achievement, moral or physical, we run the effect up to a proportionate cause: we give the agent credit for moral or bodily strength equivalent to the result which he produced. In the case before us, the believer feels the presence of Divinity, and in such a manner that he does the works of God: Is not

the mind of the Supreme commingled with his nature, and can he be supposed to be in such close concert with Divinity, without participating largely in the intelligence of the being that animates him?

It is conceivable that the theory should not be realized,—that men, from ignorance and other motives, should live far below the statement of Scripture. That is not our concern. We have to do with that which theology authorizes; with what prophecy foretells. It is not once to be admitted that the connexion between God and man is to be of the sort that we have alluded to, and then that the conclusion should be evaded, that the result should be high intelligence. The nature of the indwelling is so close that when the results are brought forward they are ascribed sometimes to God, and sometimes to man. Supreme intelligence being allowed to belong to the Deity, the practical question will amount to this, What portion of it is transferable, what loss it incurs from the earthen vessel into which it is poured? In the mean time, and with our present knowledge, our answer to this must be general and indefinite.

Our position, then, is this, that Deity being intelligent in the highest degree, and Deity establishing the most intimate and inseperable union with the believer, that this last ought, according to hypothesis and revelation, to share in the divine mind. Anything that the past history of the church might seem to offer in the way of objection is got rid of by showing cause why religion,

as it has been, could not be highly intellectual. The spurious and paltry elements to which we have pointed, supply an obvious explanation why the theory has been so completely contravened. They who have any faculty to conjure up something different from what they see, may, after they have thrown out those weak and vicious ingredients, put together, in fancy, a mode of character that was in harmony with scripture, and that contained vast elements of strength. They who are not equal to such an effort of imagination may piece together the many texts that tell of the circumstances connected with the indwelling of God, or that relate the great acts that are to be performed by a class of men more pure than the world has yet seen. He may take his stand upon the statement, "all things are possible to them that believe," and may ask, whether it be a matter to be supposed that they to whom this vast saying applies, could escape eminent mental force? He may plant his foot upon the interrogation, "When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" and raising the dilemma, what could be the state of intelligence that could be theological without having theology's prime requisite, whereupon he may propose the other question, and if theology, without faith, elicited so much mind, what shall it not effect when associated with that celestial quality?

II. A second reason why Christianity should be intellectual, is the *opponent* with whom the con-

test is carried on. There is a chapter devoted to the description of him, (Job xli.) in which images of vast strength are used to convey the idea of his stupendous power. The leading thought is, that he is proof against all the endeavours of men, and that God only can "repay him." "The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon. He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee: sling stones are turned with him into stubble. Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear. Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire. He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment. He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary. Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things; he is a king over all the children of pride."

Surveying this personage rather from the side of observation than of holy writ, we are able to say of him, without reserve, that hitherto he has been able to make it appear as if the earth belonged to him. In whatever way God has caused holy writ to come up, this intriguing spirit has produced a counterfeit that has deceived all but a very few. Within the last fifty years he has come forward more formidable than ever.

Several persons of real piety had put religion on a truly evangelical footing. With the exception

that their doctrine was at some points weak, as we have already remarked, and that their system was affected by ceremonies, God may be said to have spoken by them. Their method has been extensively imitated, and at this moment there is a greater number of persons than at any former period, who have a form of godliness and deny the power thereof. This has been carried to such an extent that it is a current principle, avowed by many, and acted upon by all, that provided the expression be orthodox, we have no title to examine the interior. Through a considerable part of Christendom, the man of nature putting on the cloak of the evangelist, utters loud and eloquent protestations as to the divinity of Christ, and the multitude cry, glory to God in the highest.

Under the influence of this general appearance of sound doctrine the community feels that never before was religion in so palmy a state. The scene narrated in connexion with the preaching of John the Baptist, where "Jerusalem and all Judea," go out to meet the teacher, is played over again. To take up that version of religion which Baxter and Bunyan introduced, which Newton and Chalmers modernized; to preach it correctly and eloquently, so that men cannot distinguish between the true and the false messenger,—this infers a great amount of ability. To realize such a scene as the church presents, where regenerate and unregenerate are colleagues in congregations, partners in the same bed, members of synods,

joint teachers in schools, associates in business, where these two classes harmoniously dispense sacraments, and with united voice eulogise the present state of the world—to affect all this needs a subtle manœuvring spirit. With our eye upon these doings, we cannot avoid recalling a description that tells of such wonderful juggling, (Ezek. xxviii. 13–20,) “Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandize they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore

will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more."

Two persons look out upon the prospect, the sinner and the saint. Let it be suggested to the one, that the world is to put on another aspect from what it has worn, he cannot be brought to entertain the thought. Many centuries, with their countless systems and neutralized schemes of amelioration, rise up to contradict the supposition. Knowing what has been proposed from Pythagoras to Comte or Cousin, he cannot be brought to give credence to the hypothesis. All power of belief is paralyzed within him, when he conjures up the long procession of expedients that seemed plausible, that had their martyrs, that were floated along on a tide of sympathy and protestation, and that did not materially improve human nature. He is staggered by the feeling that Peter describes men as bent beneath—"where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." The saint, on his side, is equally prostrated by the difficulty. He is bound to admit that the earth shall yet assume a better aspect. But inasmuch as he sees no human causation that is to lead to this result, inasmuch as he attains to it by a change of dispensation, he too virtually

confesses the foe to be invincible. In his own way he acknowledges the power of the enemy as much as the worldly objector. The one believing in fixed laws considers, therefore, that the character of men cannot be fundamentally altered. The other can only come at the good era in which he pretends to believe, by a violent change in the economy of the world. But that it is to be reached by human causation he is as far from crediting as is the former. In fact there is a sturdiness about the terrene person that the evangelical man does not exhibit. Every now and then he invents a project that he considers will render mankind just and virtuous, whereas the theologian never fancies the advent of what is good as the sequel of anything that he can do, but brings it about by a vision, wherein he describes a *literal* Christ appearing in *actual* clouds. He, then, must be a formidable foe, who thus perplexes all who look at his workmanship.

Now, if it be the really divine plan that *man* is to go out to the battle and conquer this foe, religion and ability become synonymous ideas. I who aforetime could not contemplate the thought that humanity could do any thing but make *salaams* and obeisances, behold a system of agency take shape and become a perfect engine; I perceive how to put on the armour piece by piece; I see how nicely it fits, how completely I am covered; I learn the cuts and thrusts of the sword of the Spirit. From being like one of those men

hired to become walking advertisements, an object covered over with signs; from being a creature of parade and vague sentiment, I am turned into the most efficient of the earth's inhabitants. What is this interval made up of? Between the two statements, I can keep a diorama, I can turn wheels and show off sacraments; between this and the other, I can drive back that being that is next to God in faculty; the distance is wide; what enables me to cross the intermediate space? Between the position, I through the word can bring in the era whereof it is said, in reference to the evil spirit, "and never shalt thou be any more;" and the old notion about God and a chariot, and a convulsion in the elements, there is a strange discrepancy. What composes it? Between the idea of a thundering Jupiter, scattering Satan and his myrmidons with his bolts, and the other, which transmutes all this into God and man, and systematic theology, there is a vast disparity; and shall not the plan which makes the difference, consisting, as it does, in all its parts of human endeavours, shall it not realize intelligence superior to that of Satan, and therefore only short of divine?

III. The universe consists of the two facts of mind and matter. Intelligence has no other legitimate career but to concern itself with the properties of the one or the other. Its force is measured by what it can do in one of these directions. If, dealing with either it can discover new laws or unknown applications, it is considered as

having bestowed its efforts to the best advantage. But it is the nature of religion to put one in concert with the artist from whose hands both of these proceeded; it is therefore to be expected beforehand that the position of the believer should be advantageous.

In regard to mind, the more important of the two, it is currently admitted that the past endeavours to analyze it have been characterised by a great want of success. The most talented of men through nearly half the time that the world has lasted, have applied themselves to find out what are its faculties and how they act. They show, or they acknowledge that their researches have been singularly barren of results. One marked proof that they afford of this is, that they are found at long intervals resuming enquiries that had been considered to have been disposed of long before. When they are beheld, at the distance of centuries, recurring to the question whether we discern objects themselves or their images, or this other, whether the commencements of all ideas are in the senses, or whether there be not some that emerge from instinct, we are informed in such instances, that the motion is not progressive but rotary.

It is alleged, we believe, that greater success has followed the researches in the other department. This, we are not prepared to dispute entirely; yet when the length of time is considered during which philosophers have investigated

the properties of matter, we cannot join in the wonder that is usually expressed as to the number and importance of the discoveries that have been made. When, in spite of these, it is borne in mind, how constantly man is stopped by barriers, how on the ocean he is the sport of winds and waves, how on the land he is impeded by climate and seasons, how little he can do in the air, at what expense he procures and keeps up those engines that facilitate labour, there does not seem to us to be much ground for the astonishment that is expressed in relation to this subject. The career of science, moral and material, is the history of much endeavour and small fruit. In the one direction, it is admitted that up to this time few solid results have been arrived at; in the other, it is owned that centuries were expended in following routes that could not have conducted to discovery, and even they who consider that much has been realized, are in the habit of conceding that nearly the whole of that, has been done in the two centuries that have elapsed since Bacon.

In spite of all that has been written about science, and the inductive method, it may be that the right way remains to be taken. The book of life says, "If any of you lack *wisdom* let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Theologians have termed this saving knowledge, although why they should restrict it to this, we do not know, unless it was that from the sort of religion which

they believed in, it was easy for them to say that they had knowledge there, and hard for men to disprove it. If they had accepted the hypothesis that mathematics or metaphysics were comprehended in the term, that would have placed them in the situation of being obliged to look for knowledge that men could take cognizance of, and for the failing to acquire which, they subjected themselves to contempt.

If to ask God be the appointed road to wisdom, and if it be a religious road, then the religious man should be expected to walk on it. The career of religion then, placing a man in the circumstances in which to ask wisdom, becomes a part of his duty—an article of his creed: This career, placing him in what may be continual communication with the sovereign artist, a knowledge of the works and laws of God follows as a natural consequence. I confer with the Father of Spirits: in consequence of his own command, I apply to him for wisdom: It is to be expected that something more should come out of these premises than that saving knowledge, as it has been called, that knows and does nothing that is discernible. I am in conference with the Being that created mind and matter; I am in connexion with that Word of his in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; I am taught of that Spirit who searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God; it is essential to my vocation that I should exercise spiritual baptism—that I should cast out devils: can such deeds be

done without the presence of peculiar wisdom? It is demanded of me that the communication of my faith should become effectual. When this is analyzed, it seems to imply an empire over mind. But this must proceed from knowledge.

In saying that the believer is invited to live in constant correspondence with an infinitely wise being, the inference is included that he should be eminent in wisdom. In stating that he is called upon, as an essential part of his profession, to conquer a spirit greater than the human, surpassing wisdom is virtually implied. In affirming that his duty is not fulfilled, unless he master other natures, and expel that strong influence that clings to them with stern tenacity, wisdom is predicated of him, for who could go up to those who naturally are his equals, and command their greatest inclinations to go down before him, except one who was wise in a superlative degree.

IV. The feature of religion, which we term the *moral*, appears to stipulate that the believer should become eminently intellectual.

To have this element largely developed, secures that he will insist on doing nothing that is really opposed to the finest development of his thinking nature. The conditions that he imposes on life, will be to this effect: The supreme governor cannot design that any one of his creatures should be forced to that which is hurtful to the advances of his peculiar nature. Other men in selecting a line of business, do a something independent of what

is either moral or intellectual, in order to catch the feeling of the hour : I can listen to no such compromise. It is common for persons to spend a considerable part of their time in soliciting the favour of those in power : I refuse to rise by any other means save by making in myself the greatest possible amount of desert. Men in general are willing to take on some trick or style that suits passing feelings : I can allow myself to adopt no manner except that which comes out spontaneously, as the expression of feelings that I am not ashamed to cherish.

It has been usual hitherto to add certain rites to a belief in the gospel. Were you to succeed in convincing men in general that these were Judaisms, or ceremonies taken on since the record was closed, they would answer, that they were harmless, and that the people would not listen to the Word without them. The person governed by moral considerations, stipulates that he shall teach the very mind of the Spirit, neither more nor less. Ceremony obtaining in the service of God, passes unquestioned into all the other concerns of life. He who accepts what is, as his rule, has some equivocation that enables him to bow the head to each popular formality, and thus spends more time and effort than men are aware of. He who rules himself by the highest standard, saves all this, because he will not consent to take a part in a pantomime which has no other recom-

mentation than that a certain number of human beings are not so scrupulous.

Punctilios connected with dress and food occupy much of men's time, from the king downwards. The person of high principle will endeavour to reconcile a not behaving himself unseemly, with an avoidance of all that is really superfluous in such matters; and by so acting, will economize much time and effort that others unthinkingly throw away. Persons without religion are necessarily the victims of at least one propensity that is of pernicious tendency. Their intellectual life means that they think, as far as is compatible with the appetite for praise, money, pleasure, sensuality or indolence, to which they yield. He who casts aside "every weight, and the sin that doth most easily beset him," is a great gainer at this point. Having this great advantage over other persons, he has, in this circumstance, one reason why his light should shine forth with more effulgence.

A husband, even if he be a man of intellect, considers that his wife may properly live on a much lower plane, and not conferring with her in things speculative, sees her low tendencies increase—sees the interval between them widen, and reconciles himself to the society of one who retards rather than aids his development, with the explanation, that it is not designed that women should be thinking beings. The religious person, who really believes the bible, taught by it that the conjugal relation should be the counterpart of that

between Christ and the church, selects a partner on this idea, marks out for her a thinking life, does not suffer that she should contract any habits that will interfere with her best interests, confers with her on all that interests himself, and from her more susceptible nature derives principles that his unaided mind could not have originated.

The man of this world expends much time foolishly upon his children. In early years, they are allowed to make inclination their rule. The parents are not ashamed to lose effort in soothing and humouring passions that they ought to have checked from the first. So much time is squandered by the ordinary father in cares that might be abridged in a very great degree, that a late writer assigns this as one reason why persons thus circumstanced have not done the greatest things in the way of authorship. To unmarried, or childless men, he assigns many of the principal achievements in letters. The person of high principle could not bear the idea that he was sacrificing the formation of character to the gratification of propensity. To consume effort on low charges, suggested by the animal nature, and not beneficial to those on whom they were bestowed, would appear to him a high and indictable offence.

When all these different causes are put together; when it is considered with what a weight they come down upon ordinary men; how ludicrous they make them to appear; how busy they render them in the midst of melancholy idleness, it is to

say something, much to the credit of true morality, that it enables its possessor to impose laws upon such contingencies—to command them that they desist from presuming to obstruct his path.

I am a convert to the Christian religion : as such, I refuse to take my cue from the prevailing practices of society. It is much more befitting, if my religion means much, that I should give, than that I should take an influence. As a child of God, I am willing to do my endeavour that talent and virtue should be contributed to the capital of society ; but I object to make my way by some cant or mannerism that the very animals who exact it of me will ridicule a few years later. Seeking a city that hath foundations, I cannot consent to consume time or effort in frequenting funerals or masked balls, in assembling my household twice a day for what is called worship, in conforming my countenance to a regulation aspect, or in giving to my speech the peculiar intonation that the man of outsides holds to be indicative of unction. Desiring to “redeem the time, and so to number my days as to apply my heart unto wisdom,” I refuse to make myself up once or twice a year to some sacramental observance, or once a week to some piece of sabbatical will-worship. The supreme God has freed me from ordinances—has put me in possession of a portable and economical religion, by enabling me all the time “to worship him in spirit and in truth.”

Believing that the life of faith is entitled to stip-

ulate that its development should be of the most vigorous and progressive kind, I may submit to hard fare, unpleasant avocations, to many things that men esteem unendurable, and from which most of them escape: these I endure, because religion may run through them all. But, to be a posture-master, a tide-waiter, a sign-board,—this I will not brook, although it would conduct me to high station, and although men would fall down and do me homage. There are fictions and ceremonies, a compliance with which is exacted of all; these I will not submit to, because they are not true—because, to consent to them is a lie, and is therefore not compatible with the acquisition of the best modes of thought and action. As a professional person and member of society, as a husband or a father, I wish not to behave myself unseemly, nor to purchase for myself the cheap notoriety of being eccentric: at the same time, I am convinced that the God who has placed me in these positions can require nothing of me that is at variance with the high philosophy of his religion.

By such a theory, one commands life, so far as men are concerned; and being pious, in a deep practical way, finds exemption from all that Egyptian bondage that must spoil the faculties of those who consent to it, and invent fictions to explain why they consent. By requiring of life that it should ask of him no one look, or posture, or utterance, that the Spirit of Truth could not be supposed to suggest, he secures for himself that his

inward life shall grow on the highest principles of theoretical excellence. If, in stipulating for this, he is walking on a divine and enjoined path, there cannot be a question that he will be fed and sustained.

Thus, morality and intellect, which are usually regarded as such separable facts, because the morality that obtains means the ceremonious, the austere, and the contemptible, might, on a different theory, be made wonderfully to help each other. The moral, coming to be defined as that which, through the Spirit, took the most direct way through life, and insisted on keeping up the God-like at every step,—the intelligent might regard it as the worthiest of all associates, and the two together would produce the agent who should realize the great and good results predicted in the word of God.

LECTURE IV.

THE ONENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM.

THE varieties in the Christian religion have been of two sorts,—they have had relation to doctrines or to ceremonies. They have stood connected with mental or corporeal circumstances. Men that were capable of speculation have lived in the one category; those who did not reason, or at least not in religion, have allowed their interest to be confined within the other.

The first and the last centuries of our era have been the most fertile in schisms; in the one case, the disputes were perhaps more philosophical; in the other, they have revolved more frequently round matters of discipline. The impulse given to religion by the piety of the apostles and their immediate followers continued to be felt during several ages, and so long as it lasted, men did not quite descend to the questions of upholstery, that engrossed their attention somewhat later. In the church of the first four or five centuries, there was much heresy, and the attempts to blend Oriental or Grecian philosophy with the religion of Jesus

were many and frequent. In these the extravagant and the bizarre were very conspicuous.

Those discussions raised by the believers in Eons, by the Monothelites, the Patripassians, the Essenes, and others, discovered a fantastic and unpractical state of mind; but they were better on the whole than most that has agitated the churches ever since. Whether the Father suffered in the Son, whether these two beings had more than one will, whether they were co-eternal, or of different quality in this respect. We do not say that they who raised these discussions were holy men, nor yet that they were of the soundest understanding; at all events, they were capable of entertaining high subjects. In disputing about these topics they walked straight up to the deepest elements in the religion of God, and although there was a great logical error involved, in suggesting differences that were as much cumbered by a mystery as the points which they sought to explode, still the controversy took place in the precincts of articles that were lofty. It did not, as in our day, turn on the pivot, whether the sermon should be read or not, whether the preacher should wear a cloak, and if he did, of what colour it should be, what parts of the service should be read, and what chanted, when the minister should front, and when turn his back upon the people, what should be the exact proportions of the sacred edifice, with what degree of gusto the consecrated bread should be swallowed, with what particular

solemnities Easter or Lent, or what the Scotch call "the preachings," should be observed. One engaged in the disputes of the first ages did not at least occupy himself with that which was beneath the notice of a man-milliner. He might not be entitled to feel that he was engaged in holy work, or that his lucubrations were calculated to benefit the body of mankind, but he had the right to think that he was busied about high abstract questions; and if he could not exactly take the consolation to his bosom that his soul was benefited, he might consider that he had cause to think that his faculties were sharpened.

The nucleus that gave rise to all that supervened in the way of variety, has not been pointed out by former writers; they did not ascend to the source; they mistook a tributary for the main stream. We find it in the conduct of the apostles. As *men*, and in their *actions*, they palpably infringed the principles recognized in their writings; they cast lots, they repaired to the temple, they made distinctions in meats, they prevaricated, they shifted the measure in order to suit different cases, they observed Jewish feasts, they appealed to sectarian feelings, they used the devices of the lawyer. By these declensions the gospel was corrupted, and in so subtle a manner, that the source of the mischief has not yet begun to be suspected. Had the standard been maintained unimpaired by the disciples of Christ, men would not have been seen so soon after raising questions

that disclosed so great a want of a deep and saving faith.

The cause that has produced the greatest number of heresies, is that form of pride that objects to mystery in a divine message. It is the error of a mind that is not of the deepest quality. If, while it impugned those mysteries that the Word bears on its surface, it substituted others that contained less difficulty, or none at all, something might appear to be gained. But when it denies what purports to be revealed, in order to put in its place what, at least, has not the appearance of divine authority, and when in doing so, it gives us that which, philosophically speaking, contains an equal difficulty, we are not benefited by the substitution. To select an example of this: The word of God appears to propound the two statements that everything is appointed, and that man's liberty is not invaded. To the human mind there is absolute contradiction in this: the link that reconciles the propositions belongs to an order of thought that the faculties of mortals cannot by any means take cognizance of. The innovator, guided by sentiment, rather than by strong reason, tries to get rid of incompatible truths; yet whichever of the above propositions he alters, he leaves a difficulty of the same magnitude with that which staggers him. If he says that man is not free, he produces the anomaly that the Deity made the world to be the theatre of an automaton; that he devoted his Son, in order to obtain immor-

tal life for this machine; that having first constituted him really incapable of good or evil, he then proceeds to deal with him as a responsible being, and assigns eternal rewards or punishments, as the case may be. If he interferes with the other proposition, and denies that events are decreed, he does not improve his position. Things must be arranged in some way or other, because prophecy deals with them as in this category, and discloses what is to fall out down to the close of time. But, if they are ordered, it is either by the God who writes the Bible, or by another god. If the first alternative is accepted, we need proceed no farther; if the second, we are called upon to believe in two gods, whereas there is nothing clearer in all revelation than this, that there is but one.

It is well that the love of simplicity should exist, but it is not well that this feeling should induce a man to interfere with what professes to be the word of God, unless he can effect such a change as will completely obviate the difficulty of which he complains. In the one case, two statements that seem contradictory are offered to us, with the comment "thus saith the Lord," and with the promise "He giveth the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." In the other, two propositions, equally incompatible, are tendered, without any voucher or collateral reason being offered why we should receive them. The cases are not of the same quality. If the objector could produce a statement,

that, without doing violence to truth in any direction, would bring out a result that involved no mystery; if he turned that which was mysterious into that which was plain, there would be a reason, at the first blush of the thing, why we should think well of his version of the subject. But, when the whole result is to substitute one mystery for another, there is no advantage. Yet, although this is a correct description of each successive innovation, a man of talent is not ashamed to lead the way, and persons of ability do not blush to follow him. An outcry is raised; people are led to believe that a new era is opening; years of eager excitement take place; and all this, not because the weight has been removed, but merely because it has been shifted. The Creator of all things proffers a message full of blessings to his creatures; along with points that are intelligible he inserts others that transcend our capacity; in proof that it is his revelation, he affords a voucher, "the Spirit witnessing with our spirits." We refuse the missive, assigning as a reason, that there ought to be no dark places in a divine communication. A being like ourselves offers us his view of the subject; he alters the form merely, but leaves, as essential, a mystery as he found; he affords no authority but his own character why we should close with him; and behold those who held it to be illogical to entertain the first version, see nothing unreasonable in giving in their adhesion to the other.

The schismatic is sometimes actuated by the influence of one particular propensity of his nature. Thus, the feeling of *kindness* is strong in him, and he reasonably concludes that it must be at least as active in the Divinity. Besides, he reads in the word of Truth, that "God is love;" he finds this saying, in company with a crowd of others of a similar nature; and from the whole, he infers, that eternal punishments cannot belong to the Bible. But, in this argument he forgets the many passages which roundly declare the truth to which he objects. He does not mind that in dealing with them in the arbitrary way which he follows, he sanctions a mode of interpreting scripture, that if adopted, leaves us no certainty in regard to any doctrine. For, to get rid of one obnoxious view in a lawless manner, erects want of rule into a rule, and destroys the prospect of precision in any other instance. Nor yet does he remember that there are attributes assigned to the Almighty in scripture, that account for the fact of which he desires to be rid. If he can cite many passages which speak of the love of God, his antagonists can adduce as many others that are plain and emphatic about his justice, his severity and his vengeance. In addition to these, it ought to have occurred to him that the texts which describe the sinner as dead by nature, place him beyond the scope of grace, unless it could be proved that the mere fact of the death of Christ abolished this deadness and infused a new spirit into every man.

Further, it should have presented itself to him, that there are those who refuse the offers of mercy made to them through Jesus Christ, and that this, the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, is described as a sin that shall not be pardoned, whether in this life, or in that which is to come. Again, he might have thought of those texts that affirm that there is but one way of escape, and that through faith in Christ; and those others, that represent what we do here as final. But the one consideration to which his mind is alive, blinds him to these and all other arguments. Because one set of passages of limited extent seem to favour his theory, he does violence to others much more numerous, that oppose him from many directions.

The strongest intellect, we think, will hardly take this course: rather than do so, it will embrace a mode of reasoning that will put it at variance with revelation as a whole. In the history of literature, there are many examples where those who have taken this thorough method have been minds of the first order. On the other hand, we incline to think that the same annals do not furnish cases of very remarkable men who have been theologians on the notion of taking a partial view of inspiration. A man of a quiet, and what is called moral turn, will be apt to innovate, especially in those directions where the bible describes human nature as entirely devoid of goodness. His own passions are moderate, and he experiences little difficulty in subjecting them to ordinary sub-

lunary motives. He sees many who are constituted like himself, and who support him in his ideas. He beholds others that pretend to a higher Christianity than that which he professes, who do not walk in a more direct line of moral probity. Seeing this, he asks, How can I consent that such a line should be drawn as should lay mankind off into the two divisions of children of light and children of darkness? I do not perceive two classes, says he, that correspond with definitions so wide apart. He lays stress upon the remarkable virtue that he sees displayed in directions where there is no cause to consider that an evangelical influence is at work. Socrates calmly considers the approaches of that death from which he might have escaped, had he chosen to avail himself of the expedients that his friends had put in his power. Regulus devotes himself to a cruel death that his country may not be compromised, and Roman honour may suffer no tarnish. Howard spends his life in seeking out human misery, in prisons, hospitals, and mad-houses, grudging no effort that enabled him to lighten the misery even of the vilest of his fellow-beings. Men of this stamp occur in considerable numbers: others, actuated by feelings not much inferior in point of heroism and benevolence, are found in every neighbourhood: how then can I admit, says he, that the nature which yields such products is that vile thing which some theologians describe it?

In this his analysis is defective. He does not

take into account the influence of organization, which renders some of the apparently noble modes of action to flow, as it were, from instinct. Nor does he allow for the effect of education, which, when adroitly conducted, can induce its subject to practice strange restraint: Nor does he assign what belongs to the love of praise: Nor does he estimate the force of the legal spirit, which will prompt a person to make sacrifices apparently greater than those which true religion exacts: Nor does he consider that what he lays stress upon is only a part of the nature, and that the individual who looks so well in one direction acquires this ability by allowing some other part of the character to have full scope: Above all, he is not aware of the fact, that he has no proper standard with which to compare his well-varnished worldling. The Christian with whom he does compare him, is not, as he supposes, agreeable to the word of God. He is the poor, feeble product of diluted, inconsistent doctrines—of ceremonies and will-worship. Instead of being a fair specimen of what religion can accomplish, he is that creature who extorts from the Saviour the complaint, that these are the wounds which he received in the house of his friends. Because he stands forth the only example of the believer that human life supplies, the man whose eyes range about in all directions, and whose gaze has been arrested by the signal instances of virtue that are furnished by mere nature, he disallows the distinction that

orthodoxy insists on; he maintains that the earth does not furnish the two opposite characters—the Cain and Abel that the churchman speaks of. He argues, that if the man without faith can act so well, nay, excel in apparent righteousness the man of profession, that there is no reason why he should concede so grave a demand as this, that human nature should be given up as “dead in trespasses and sins.” They who have taken the most daring view of this question, have favoured the Pelagian doctrine, which denies the Fall. They who have gone but a limited length in this direction, have been satisfied with the position of the Arminians, who allege that, in consequence of the death of Christ, there is a little light in every man.

But the class of topics that has been by much the most prolific in disputes and varieties, is what is called discipline. Doctrines, as yet, have appealed to but a small proportion of society: Rites, on the contrary, speak to feelings that the masses can share in. Whether Christ be *homoousios*, or *homoiousios*—co-eternal with the Father, or but the first of creatures; whether all events are fore-ordained, or are left open to chance and accident; whether human nature be utterly fallen, or whether it has the power within itself to rise up in opposition to evil propensity; whether the sins of time shall be expiated by eternal exclusion from the favour of God, or whether they shall be atoned for by punishment short of everlasting,—it is extraordinary how few minds are of the texture that

cares to debate such questions. On the contrary, let it be an object that addresses the senses, that requires neither spirituality nor intelligence, and numbers press forward to discuss it. To deal with a mechanical matter, and while it is so, to be under the impression that you are doing something very much to the glory of God, is a pungent combination that is vastly agreeable to mortals. Never does the divine life appear so delightful as when its direction and that of natural inclination appear to be absolutely identical. Whilst working at some piece of carpentry that to the eye of reason would seem nothing superior, to be able to call that godliness, is a contingency that exerts singular fascination on the crowd.

Whether white Friars or black Friars wear the most heavenly costume; whether Friday or Saturday be the most suitable to abstain from flesh; what is the most sacred form and position of a cathedral; what the divinest fashion of a belfry; what should be the manner of the imposition of hands; what mode of wearing the beard may be considered to be the most acceptable in the sight of God; which is the heaven-descended mode of administering baptism; whether should the services of a congregation commence with psalmody or prayer; whether is a graduated or a level hierarchy most pleasing to the Supreme. No one ever made an appeal to a community in regard to a subject of this rank, without feeling that it responded in a general and eager manner. This

has been most remarkably illustrated within the last twenty years.

In the most erudite of two learned universities, in the most distinguished college of that university, a knot of elegant scholars attempted to explode doctrine, and to revive a religion that should require little but the eyes and ears. That it should strike them that something needed to be done, we do not wonder: that this should have occurred to them as exactly that which the emergency asked, is very remarkable. The pamphlets which they sent forth, written in no very eloquent style, profoundly interested and aroused the nation. In this age of steam engines and pauperism, there was scarcely any topic that provoked so much feeling. How acutely exciting—whether candles should be lighted on altars in broad day light; or what should be done with that which remained of the communion wine! What fascinating questions arose as to fald-stools and lecterns, as to the canonical intonation, or the amount of sacred heraldry that should enter into the adornment of an Oriel window! How becomingly did dignitaries interpose with their endeavours to sail felicitously between the Scylla of evangelical leanness, and the Charybdis of tractarian obesity! How sweetly did they tell their subalterns to bargain for as much Rite as they could obtain from communities too much infected by a Methodistical and vulgar taste for plainness!

This heavy farce was played for years. It en-

gaged attention from the Sovereign down to the church-beadle. Peers, Generals, Ambassadors and Judges, arrayed themselves on the one side or the other. This, in the land that gave rise to the philosophy of Bacon, the astronomy of Newton, the commentaries of Blackstone, the political economy of Adam Smith. These were the persons who professed to understand and to expound such high matters. The controversy lasted for years. It closed not because the nation saw and were disgusted by its littleness,—not because a criterion was erected that for ever after was to fix, beyond debate, the exact proportions of doctrine and ceremony that should enter into religion. It was not principle that brought it to a termination. It ended, because men like a little variety—because theological disputes have their ebbs and flows; and perhaps as much on this account as on any other, that, during the strife, a sect which both parties disliked fully more than they disliked each other, began to renew its pretensions, and to threaten to be formidable.

Round the two subjects of doctrine and ceremony have revolved those disputes and schisms that have been so marked a feature in the history of religion; and the fact that they have sprung more especially out of the latter circumstance of ceremony, has probably tended, in a high degree, to render Christianity disreputable in the eyes of many thinking men. That the system which professed to have come direct from Jehovah, should

appear to give rise to endless contention; particularly that it should seem to sanction all the controversies that arose about surplices and "genealogies," this created a prepossession in the minds of those who did not stay to examine with care. It is a poor aspect in which to place the religion of God, to represent it in such a manner as that it is for ever clamouring about rites. This divided condition has of course prevented the gospel from exerting a strong influence, even when it has appeared in those shapes that contained salvation. Nothing can more impede the action of that which purports to be divine, than a contest among several sections, each declaring that it is the genuine Zion. To this diversity of creeds also is owing that confusion, or *Babylon*, which we have the authority of prophecy to apprise us, should occur in the history of the church of the New Testament. To realize it the element which above all others was necessary, was this of contending creeds. The human mind, indisposed under any circumstances, to receive religious impressions, has too good a plea on which to excuse its unbelief. It feels confused when solicited by competing claimants, and no doubt it takes advantage of this to exaggerate its doubts. When it sees that there is no one, even of what might be conceived to be cardinal points, but receives various constructions, it feels puzzled to know which is the truth, and at all events makes use of this as an apology. What is as gloomy a feature as any is, that this

diversity of sentiment does not seem, in any direction, to attract attention as a fact that deserves to be lamented. When referred to, it is spoken of as necessary to the human mind, which is at least as various in its form as the clashing systems of religion. In other instances, it is mentioned as a means whereby a brisk circulation is promoted.

There can be no doubt that a good *interim* explanation can be brought forward. Even the pious and enlightened man, who understands what is and what is to be, can behold design and benevolence in this otherwise deplorable circumstance. He can say, it was predicted. He can stay his mind with the thought, that it was a preconcerted conclusion. Among the types, there is one that portrays it vividly. In remote times, they seek to build Babel, which is Babylon. Their discourse is, "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be *scattered abroad* upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city.

Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth, and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." This symbolic situation supplies the believer with the consolation that at least our present condition was not unforeseen. It does not induce him to confound things, and to call sweet bitter, or bitter sweet. But it informs him of what is, and *why* it is. It apprises him not merely that this state of the church is in consequence of prophecy; but also that it happened in order to avert a worse evil. Had men continued to be of one speech, their wickedness would have entailed consequences too enormously pernicious.

Satisfied then that there went foresight and benevolence to bring about the present contingency, the wise believer may enjoy that composure of spirit that is the best basis for active exertion. Because our state, awful as it is, might have been worse, therefore will I rejoice in the Lord, therefore will I use my liberty for his glory. This freedom of mine I refer not to the fact that men willingly concede it to me, but to the other circumstance, that the skill of God has so divided them, that they cannot combine to crush me. This power to think and act, that I owe to the kindness of God, I will turn against that distracted church that would repress all enquiry, could it but agree within itself. As Daniel, in Babylon, states that he "understood by books the number of the

years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem," so will I, taught by the Spirit, search out those scriptural means whereby the weak and captive church may be led back again into its own land.

In what follows, we shall attempt to adduce some of the considerations that the bible furnishes for regarding the Christian religion as a system philosophically one: some of the advantages that will accrue from it when, by the grace of God, and the efforts of believers, it shall have been brought into such a condition, and some of those means that shall cause it to come forth as "one faith, one Lord, and one baptism."

When we have regard to that set of symbols and incidents that are avowedly the basis of revealed theology, we procure the idea of which we are in quest. From these we learn that God chose one people out of all the nations of the earth. Proceeding on this principle, it was a stern decree that the selected race should not depart from the condition, should not mix themselves with any other peoples. When they infringed the order, severe chastisements befel them. One reason assigned why they were carried into Babylon is, that they did not destroy the nation. In the account of the Jerusalem, or church of the latter day, it is said, "And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." One who peruses the many references to the cir-

cumstance is puzzled to think how Jehovah can be thus particular in drawing a line between one petty family and another; how he can be thus severe in exacting the closest attention to his orders, can be thus terrible in visiting with punishment the infraction of the order. It needs the explanation, that this is a type, in order to enable us to attach to these incidents the authority and importance due to a portion of the sacred volume.

There was a similar oneness about the other institutions of the Old Testament. As one people was the depositary of heaven-descended theology, so one land was invested with the character of sanctity: in it the inheritance of each of the tribes was laid off by divine appointment, and with minute exactitude: it was to be considered that this arrangement was divine and final. Out of the twelve tribes one was chosen to perform certain sacrificial and clerical functions, which are thus described, (Deut. x. 8,) "At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day." This enactment was as positive as the others. Fire from heaven descends to consume some of those officials who had offered incense in the sanctuary in a way not prescribed. A person who puts forth his hand to prevent the ark from falling, is not thanked for his officiousness, but is struck dead on the spot. With similar precision, is a *place* chosen out of the tribe of

Judah, where God might put his name: there did hypothetical holiness reside: thither did the people come up at specified seasons: if in a remote land, they were commanded to worship with their faces turned in the direction of the consecrated spot. One of the heaviest offences committed in the Hebrew annals, is when this institution was violated, and two calves were set up, the one at Bethel, the other at Dan.

In the records of the Bible, there is no more imposing part than that which relates the details connected with the building of the temple by Solomon, and the solemnities that took place when it was consecrated. Allusions to this condition of sanctity residing in a specified spot are frequent. Ps. lxxv. 1, "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed." Ps. lxxviii. 29, "Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee." Ps. lxxvi. 1-4, "In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel. In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion. There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield; and the sword, and the battle." The most explicit statement to this effect is probably Psalm lxxxvii, "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah. I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there.

And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah. As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee." The enquiring mind asks, Does the Most High take care for buildings, does he countenance the idea that a place, an edifice, can be invested with sanctity? And if this incident be a symbol, the enquirer desires to be informed whether its intention was not emphatically to denote the unity of the system shadowed forth.

All other parts were in accordance with this. The sacrifices, in regard to their number, quality, and circumstances of time and place, the solemn feasts, the dress of priests and people, the nature of their food, their mode of tillage, the circumstances of their intercourse with other nations, are all defined. In surveying any part of this economy, the eye lights upon that which is ascertained and uniform: here there is nothing arbitrary: and when it is considered that the articles thus minutely specified, are usually insignificant in themselves, that the infringement of the regulation would, so far as the mere act is concerned, carry with it no bad consequences to the agent or to others; to what conclusion can we come, but that these rigid definitions are propounded, not on their own account, but because of what they point to.

Regulations relating to indifferent matters, as,

for instance, the form and material of an altar, or the mode of wearing the beard; these, guarded by penalties of a severe sort, sometimes by death; could the idea of unbending unity have been better cut into the jurisprudence of a nation? One gathers confirmation for this argument, by attending to the punishments that befal Israel, and which are attributed to the circumstance, that it has dealt in an arbitrary way with those rules that it ought to have observed in all their rigour. God's heritage is then spoken of as "a speckled bird," and long chapters are filled with statements how distasteful it had become in his sight. The people, with many circumstances of ignominy, are given over into the power of the king of Babylon, whose slaves they become, and from whose people they endure the extremes of contempt and cruelty: in this situation the sacred record describes them as pouring forth their long drawn sighs of agony. Now what is all this? This excess of humiliation represents that which comes of mixture and confusion. But if a type of such magnitude be used to incorporate the thought connected with confusion, how greatly opposed must the Supreme be to that which he so shows up! When the builders of Babel conspired together to rear an edifice whose top should reach the heavens, the Almighty interposed and confounded their language. To this fact the Psalmist makes allusion when (Ps. lv. 9,) he says, "Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues; for I have seen violence and strife in

the city." But it matters not to Jehovah, that certain rude people entertain high thoughts of themselves, when with ignorant ideas about the canopy above them, they proceed to build a tower of very calculable altitude. He would not think it worth while to give his interposition in such an instance a place in the book of life, unless the literal fact contained within it a broader and deeper truth. But if he interfered in the way related, and produced confusion, his act was a proof of his displeasure, and so long as they suffered under it, tells the tale that disorder is hateful to God.

In passages which portray the church of the latter days we are informed that it is a scene characterized by unity of sentiment: Isa. lii. 8, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Joel iii. 17, "So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion my holy mountain; then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more."

But if this be what is predicated of the church, when it becomes agreeable to God, it does not please him before it complies with this description. If it be one of the reasons for which the reformed church is extolled, that there is oneness of idea, it must be a cause why the unreformed church deserves censure, that it is split into sects. We behold the slayers of Christ at the time that they

crucified him, parting his garments among them; but if the life of the Redeemer be a figure of the history of his church, it will be hard to shut us out from the opinion, that this particular act denotes the divided state that was to occur in the church at the time when religion should be put to death. But a fact that corresponds with one of the most contumelious things that befel the representative man, must, when realized in the moral history of the church, be eminently displeasing to the Most High.

Paul, addressing the Christians of Corinth, uses this language,—“I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it: For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.” But if the apostle could reasonably make disunion a charge against the members of a church, we are entitled to this hour to consider this circumstance in the same light. In another place, the same Paul speaks of “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” But that to which these terms are applicable, is the opposite of that rent and divided thing that we call the Christian religion. There are passages that liken the church to a vine, a body, a temple; others, that speak of there being a variety of “operations,” yet but one spirit; others, that discourse of believers being gathered together in one; others, that mention “the unity of the spirit.” From all such, the inference for which we contend is fairly derived. The objec-

tion, which the schismatic state of the church raises in the mind of the sane enquirer, is obviated by the sophism, that men are variously organized, that they always have differed, that they will continue to differ, and that separate routes may terminate in the same point. By such arguments, the attention of men is diverted from the true state of the case. When theology comes to attract more of men's minds and inclinations, they will refuse to be deceived by so shallow a sophism. Because men in an unregenerate condition, and actuated by selfish motives, live in a disunited state, and pursue their ends without regard to the feelings of each other, that is no reason why they should continue in the same condition when their circumstances are altered. The Spirit of God is invariably described as effecting a transformation on human nature. But a being metamorphosed is not amenable to the same rules to which he was subject before the change. It may be very requisite to humanity to live at variance when it is left undisturbed by the entrance of a higher principle,—but that is no reason why it should exhibit the same phenomena when the circumstances are morally reversed. The introduction of the Holy Spirit into human nature is, on scriptural authority, the entrance of God into man—a marriage between the Infinite and the finite. But the divine nature, associated with human nature, is well entitled to give laws, and not to receive them. This being the case, it is

useless to make that which men do, under certain circumstances, a rule by which they are to be controlled, when the conditions are exactly reversed. Neither is it true that the different roads meet in one point; for, among the creeds that prevail, there are several that clash in reference to articles that we must hold to be quite contradictory. The Trinitarian and Unitarian, the Calvinist and the Arminian, the believer in particular redemption, and the believer in the salvation of the whole species,—how can it be pretended that they arrive at the same terminus except by some hypothesis that would make it immaterial how we thought in religion?

We go on to remark, that benefits of the best description would arise out of a change,—that, while it enabled men to see correctly, enabled them to see eye to eye. Other sciences have stood in a condition similar to that which theology now occupies. They consisted not so much of principles, but of facts, few or many, not arranged under general laws. While they were in this state, they did not show one, but many aspects to man. They were rather the spheres of fancy than of exact thinking. Persons found in them exercise for the powers that are now bestowed on the romance. Astronomy and chemistry, during many ages, passed through the stage of which we speak. The one subserved superstition, by encouraging the notion that the constellations exerted a mysterious influence on the lot of mortals,

—an idea which, like the fatalism of the Greek tragedy, was very pleasing to fancy. The other, endeavoured to discover a method by which to transmute metals into gold,—a remedy that would be equally applicable to all diseases,—a means whereby life might be indefinitely prolonged. It proceeded on the notion that curious combinations of herbs and other objects, such mixtures as Shakspeare puts into his witches' cauldron, possessed mysterious properties, or were endowed with the power of producing preternatural effects. While these sciences continued to be chiefly a collection of extravagant fancies, it is to be presumed that there was no particular way,—that one method seemed as good as another, and that few salutary results were attained. After they had remained for a certain time in this state, some mind of much vigour appeared, observed phenomena with attention, applied the telescope or the alembic as a means of investigation, found out some general laws, and so laid the foundation of a method which had given proof that it deserved to be followed.

It would be hard to convince theologians that these remarks are applicable to their department, for they are strongly under the impression that their art is in a very advanced posture. The writer heard Chalmers in 1829 commence a course of lectures with the observation, that among the possible things that were to be looked for, a new idea in theology could hardly be reckoned. He

added, that the finest intelligences, through a succession of ages, had applied themselves to its elucidation,—that more mind had been bestowed on the Bible than on any other book, the Pandects, we think not excepted,—and that, on the whole, all which could be looked for from any modern commentator is, that he should adduce the thoughts that have been advanced before. Here is a statement coming from a high quarter, that runs counter to that which we bring forward, and asserts that theology has long arrived at a very perfect state. It may be fairly presumed that this expresses very nearly what the most of the evangelical church would be prepared to concur in. This then is the state of theology; it is rent into a great number of factions, entertaining opinions of the most contradictory kind; the master spirits of the age evince little regard for it, and the most talented teachers inform their pupils that the science has reached that state at which a new idea is not to be looked for.

A system that would commence and proceed in such a manner as that it pursued a fixed method, would have one point at least to recommend it to a disciplined intelligence. He would see in it that which claimed his respect in connexion with other sciences, and he would have no good plea for withholding it here. It must be very fatal to the system that pretends to come down from God out of heaven, that its most eager advocates stipulate that it should not be regarded as amenable to any

fixed principle. This may not occasion that the man of talent will at once pronounce the message to be an imposture, because, even he does not always reason correctly—even he is the slave of custom and feeling. But it cuts him off: it prevents him from feeling the interest that he would otherwise cherish. Be it so, that there is nothing regular or logical in the disposition of the Bible: be it so, that to endow it with such qualities is to do much irreverence to it and to its author: I leave you in possession of your discovery. Since there is such a sweet harmony between this book without law and your idiosyncrasy, do you devote yourself to its exposition: you will excuse me from bestowing my efforts in the same way. I do not say that your time is ill employed; I make no comments upon your tastes and studies; I am willing to receive my theology on trust from you; I am ready to believe, on your authority, that this volume is at once lawless and divine. All that I ask is, that I be permitted to choose my own path, and to devote my faculties to pursuits that are susceptible of a calculus, that are amenable to rules, that admit the application of means to ends. When I have given the pith of the week to those studies which encourage the expectation of results, because they allow the supposition that new ideas may be discovered, I will come, and in an edifying style, kneel and bow and look into my hat in honour of your system, which is really refreshing after a great deal of hard thinking, inasmuch as

it seems to promise salvation to the worshipper, without exacting of him that he should exert his faculties.

If the man of good understanding reasons, or at least feels in this way, all the blame is not to be laid on him. He has been sedulously instructed to consider that there is no better work in which he can engage than the improvement of his mind. After he has been thoroughly convinced of this, and has become enamoured of the pursuit, he is summoned to give his time and efforts to a science that rejects causation and agency, and which, according to the representations of its teachers, has a peculiar adaptation to the natures of the imbecile and unlearned. A tendency to regard the Christian religion as one system would induce conviction in cases where at present dislike and contempt are felt. To the view of this theory the many schisms that have existed would be a circumstance that would be referred not to necessity but bad management. This, instead of being stated as a law entitled to regulate and to continue, would be represented as an accident that had stolen in, and that must be cast out. In place of being spoken of as that which was compatible with thorough health, it would be described as that which indicated the last extremity of disease.

It being conceded that in the very degree in which the Christian religion does not show itself as "one faith," in that extent is it removed from being a science, the admission would be a loud

appeal to the intelligence of thinking persons. We allow you to estimate our weakness by our divisions; we authorize you to make the one the measure of the other: to say this, would be to open up to the view of the intelligent the expectation of great changes. In as far as we are from reconciling all differences—from comprehending all men within the circle of one belief; just so far are our ideas of religion weak or incorrect: In this assertion, there is room on which a thinking spirit might rear the anticipation, that this same Christianity, which has been so misrepresented, contains within it, after all, the healing influences that are to produce the extraordinary effects that the world is yet to undergo. This would be to summon men to come forward and realize in Christianity the very highest things they have seen or attempted, in connexion with the best of those other things that they call sciences. We no longer, as before, draw a line between religion and those branches that you have been in the habit of respecting. We do not tell you that method is applicable to mind and matter, but has no place in that volume which relates how men shall be saved from their sins. We repent of having said to you that you may be an agent in things human; but that in the economy of grace, all faculties are equal, and all means indifferent. When we said this, we took Scripture in the letter; and not being able to do any good, we reasoned religion down to the point at which it excused our

inefficiency. Looking forth on the visible works of God; remarking the unity of purpose and the grandeur by which they are distinguished; remembering that, sublime as these are, they are but the similitudes of sacred truths, we make sure of finding in the word the traces of a Deity quite equal to the Creator of the external universe. If the system which we have hitherto extracted from the divine volume, does not realize this conception, we are willing to modify and change it, until it gives us a being corresponding with him whom we see in the visible creation.

To put it in this way, is without compromise, to propitiate those who hitherto have had little share in constructing the system. You are invited to come in. We need your best powers, because we find at last that we have been terribly beaten by the enemy. We no longer say to you that the religion of Jesus is the antagonist of mental prowess; on the contrary, it invites, extols and augments intellect. Neither do we attempt to justify our torn and distracted state. It admits of no palliation: all that we can say for it is, that it is not an accident, but has been distinctly predicted. Beginning from such admissions, the career of religion would be different from what it has been, in the degree that its theory and aspirations were of higher rationality. Holding that there should be no schism within its compass, it would be obliged to have doctrine of such strength and plainness that there would be less room for objectors to find

fault with it. Believing that faculty had just as much place in religion as in any other vocation, he who had it not, would not be permitted to go and invent a system that would maintain that he was all the better for being stupid: deeming that the Bible proposed no other agency for converting the world, than that of God acting through good men, they would be compelled to own, if souls were not saved, that it must be charged to want of efficiency in the second cause: considering that there must be the most real agreement among all parts of the Bible, they would believe that their faith and science were at fault, if at any point, they were unable to show the consistency of Scripture. Satisfied that a philosophical, not a mechanical conformity, was that at which inspiration aimed, where they could not produce conviction of mind, they would scorn to ply men with the influence of base motives. If all the faculty that at present goes to dissever the Christian religion, concurred to give it respectability and force, did so at the prompting of real holiness, with mental elements already in being, vast consequences would be effected. But if all this intelligence, by acting in concert, thereby procured the means of indefinitely augmenting its own amount, the mind soon fails to be able to realize the result. If it started from premises that recognized the immeasurable vastness of the system on which it went forth, and the willingness of the Creator to increase incalculably the powers of those enquirers

who put his willingness to the test, then the goal is separated from the eye by the mist that pours from those high transcendental regions with which the human mind is not yet familiar.

And now we proceed, in the last place, to take a look at those means whereby the unity of the faith may be realized. Of these the most direct will be to take action in regard to certain literal ideas and ordinances that are the principal causes of discord, and that stand in the way of a consistent mode of interpreting the Scriptures. These objects, although trivial in themselves, are, in our estimation, the principal cause of difficulty. They stand forward as the occasions by which religious communities are held together; and they have this advantage about them, that they are intelligible to those who can understand nothing else. The ecclesiastic, without piety, finds in these institutions a most commodious means for obtaining respect, and the appearance of that of which he wants the reality. The ecclesiastic with piety, obtains by their means a degree of influence which he could not attain by any doctrines that he preaches. There is a sufficient appearance of argument in their favour to occasion that they who defend them seem to have a good case. If there be ninety-nine who profess for one that believes, the large number will stand up for those objects on which they hang their profession; and the hundredth man will go with the majority. Now, inasmuch as these ordinances are procured

by taking Scripture in its literal state, they afford a plea why the whole Bible should be read in the same manner. He who reads the ten commandments, the celebration of the Passover by Jesus, and the injunction to baptize, thereby sanctions the receiving of a part of the Bible in its formal sense. But there are other parts where the meaning is procured by collating one scripture with another. Thus, two different modes of interpretation spring up, and it occurs to no man to devise a method whereby the whole might be subjected to a similar treatment. Because there are ceremonies, men, consulting their taste, construct from them different plans of upholstery. Any petty accident connected with one of these externals, suffices as a ground of difference, and becomes a rallying point for a sect. Because the levity of human nature is pleased to associate religion with mere sensuous matters; because men will occasionally differ about an attitude or a vestment; because even the multitude can understand and relish such questions, therefore, there is no possibility of arriving at agreement, while they subsist. So long as inspiration is understood as seeming to sanction the use of bread and wine; so long as it is a matter of moment to men whether these elements shall be taken sitting, standing, kneeling, or reclining, so long are communities liable to be torn by miserable disputes. Also, because these ceremonies constrain us to read Scripture literally,

in certain instances they supply a precedent that allows us to consider that Scripture is made up of two sorts of substance,—one to be read as it stands, the other to be excogitated by comparison among many passages. Such an idea, so long as it is countenanced, of course acts as a barrier to any one who should propose a theory that would combine all its parts. In attempting this, he comes into collision with almost the only things in the Bible that are understood and valued, either by the clergy, or the body of the people.

If, in order that religion should embrace all men within its grasp, it be necessary that it should become strong; if, in order to get strength, a general theory of a uniform and definable sort be requisite, and if this cannot be come at because of the ceremonies, then they, however trivial in themselves, stand associated with important consequences. There is a time spoken of in the Old Testament when “there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” If we are in the midst of such a time; if religion be esteemed among us that arbitrary thing that is thus symbolically represented in the book of Judges, “In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through by-ways,” then that circumstance is of moment that reduces us to this condition. If, because we insist on having certain ordinances, we are on this

account bound over to a way of understanding Scripture that excludes us from mighty principles, the barrier may be in itself of little moment, but the result is important.

I wish, because I believe it to be the mind of the Spirit, to subject all Scripture to one method; I desire to understand no part of it in an isolated and superficial style, but when I propose this, I am met by the ten commandments, and all passages relating to the supper and baptism. But so long as these are kept aloof a general theory cannot have place. In order to arrive at the most characteristic facts of the Bible it must be read in a given order. To quote its own precepts, spiritual things must be compared with spiritual; no part of it must be regarded as having any "private interpretation;" every passage must be brought up to "the analogy of the faith." But if there be any portions that are systematically exempted from such rules, the principle cannot be carried out, and the high consequences that would accrue from it cannot be realized. If strength and precision are attainable only by proceeding in a given direction; if all the influence of the present and the past are employed to put a wall across that path, then the circumstance out of which this emerges is momentous, because of that which hangs by it. If a theory, one and scientific, be requisite in order so to piece Scripture together as to bring out vast thoughts commensurate with the

character of its author, then the obstacle to this, whatever it be, cannot be too strongly reprobated. After showing up the tendency of the ordinances, to prevent united action, it will be necessary to remove or modify all doctrinal points that are erroneous in whole or in part.

If there is ever to be a strong bold system, that is to compel men to come in, we must desist from inculcating the fallacy that mind has no regular share in the divine economy, and that it matters not for the accomplishment of the divine purposes what be the quality of the faculties of the agents employed. It must no longer be heard of, that the word of God puts a premium upon imbecility, or favours the notion that in the realm of ^{the} grace we are not permitted to consider that there is an application of means to ends. In like manner we must cease from propounding such a folly as that regeneration may be effected in a man without addressing his consciousness; that he is entitled to pass through life saying that he is not sure whether he be saved; that this want of assurance, so far from telling against him, is to be taken as a proof of his meekness and piety. Further, the tenet must be abjured that would represent religion as commanding us to shut our eyes, and forbidding us to "judge" of whatever we see passing around. Also, our method must be altered in regard to a number of the most striking passages in the New Testament, which tell of the mighty con-

sequences that faith conducts to, or of the singular nearness to the Almighty that true religion offers to produce. It has been usual to say of these, that they refer to the apostles, or that they are but strong figures of speech. Before strength can run through the veins of the church, it will be indispensable that it shall not be afraid of any of these sayings, but shall insist on working them all up into its constitution and doctrine. Finally, religionists pretend to believe in a triumphant state of Christianity: but they might as well disbelieve, for all the practical benefit that they derive from the hypothesis. They bring it about by means of a change in the divine procedure. Man has no direct share in the transaction. It comes down upon him like a thunder-clap. The Bible must be so read as to give rise to the opinion that this glorious day will never come, until man so co-operates with his Maker as to bring it about. A united and a strong theology must be reputed to be the ordained agency whereby it is to be realized. When men, looking wisely and boldly into the future, shall, instead of passively hoping for a change of economy, affirm that there is nothing so large in the prospect but that faith can accomplish, then shall be seen the difference between the religion that has been able to do nothing, and that which shall effect all things. The removal of ordinances and other carnal matters that promote profession and prevent union, strength, and virtue; the putting aside of

certain weak and unreasonable doctrines ; the retaining of certain true opinions, that will be the core of the new system, as they have been the heart of the old ; such are the means whereby the first shall be superseded by the second temple, and Christ's prayer be fulfilled, "that they all may be one."

LECTURE V.

OF THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE, AND THE WANT OF A CONSISTENT METHOD HITHERTO.

THE Word of God is not in such a state as that the person who pretends to have studied it can put the novice in possession of definite rules by which he, in his turn, may become conversant with it. As far as it is a question of Hebrew or Greek, there is accuracy evinced or attempted; as far as relates to theology, precision is scarcely thought of. Even when a person of a scientific turn is connected with religion, in the sense of being an ecclesiastic, he carries his rigid reasoning to the illustration of a mundane topic, and deems that it would be unsuitably bestowed upon inspiration. Persons of a less symmetrical mind urge the prejudice still further; and not able to distinguish between imposing and receiving rules, consider that they entertain the most pious thoughts who are the furthest removed from imagining the Bible to be a philosophical system. Persons of this class, existing in great numbers, and possess-

ing a strong hold on the multitude, by the manner in which they work on the feelings, are very dictatorial in the way of denouncing all attempts at precision, and take care to represent him who speaks of such things as devoid of piety. The only partisans such a person would have, in the meantime, are those for whose sympathy he ought to feel little respect,—Sadducees, who dislike the other school, and who, while they may relish logic, have no taste for piety.

There are not many who carry their ideas of inspiration so high as to consider that the Divine Word truly proceeds from God, and that the men who were the occasions by whom it came, were only conduits. In the estimation of the majority, God's connexion with it was something quite general. The Hebrew persons through whom it flowed, are credited with the greater part of what bears their name. Their writings are considered to be imbued with the character of the men and the country. Thus, while it is not denied that the volume has some attributes of the divinity, this supposition is not pushed to any high point. Hence, we are constantly reminded of the Oriental warmth—the fervent imagery peculiar to the East. Were you to ask these persons to acknowledge that the reasoning of the volume was finer, subtler, deeper than what is to be found anywhere else, their thoughts would revert to Egypt or the wilderness, to Samuel or Amos; and they would deem that a man was actuated by a strange spirit

of mysticism, who looked for close argument from so remote a period and such unlettered men.

This is not surprising. If the channels through which the message flowed are in any degree confounded with the fountain head, this way of reasoning is a natural result. If, instead of Jehovah himself and none other coming forward to our notice, the mind lights upon some small Hebrew character, it is not strange that it should be found difficult to invest his writing with anything more than a certain simple sincerity. If the libel be restricted to Moses, Isaiah or Paul, it follows in a very easy way that you find yourself speaking about them in a manner that would imply that they are not above the failings of their age and country.

There is another class that think more correctly of inspiration. In this point their theology is just, though their heads are soft. They find no difficulty in realizing the idea that the whole Bible issues forth from God. But then their notions of the literary character of the Deity are singularly moderate. They allow that the Supreme spoke by David and Daniel; but we do not gain much by their admission. As soon as—taking them at their word—we go up to the Bible, expecting to find in it a message having characteristics worthy of its author, they virtually retract what they had before conceded. They will have none of your premises, and propositions, and arguments, regularly constructed. They will not allow that the

God who endowed Aristotle, Bacon and Newton, with the power to sustain a connected train of reasoning, should exhibit similar properties in his own work. Qualities which, being found in the most intellectual of the creatures, might be supposed to exist in a higher degree in the Creator, you are not to look for in the Word. Here, you are told, is food for babes. Here you will find a charming "simplicity," of which the evangelical palate has a peculiar and pungent perception. He who would find strong compacted argument, is reminded about babes and sucklings, and philosophy falsely so called, and the wisdom of God being foolishness with men.

From neither class can a system be obtained that enables you to interpret the whole record according to a recognized plan. They who, psychologically speaking, are capable of valuing high mental characteristics, are precluded, by their theory, from finding much of such qualities in the Bible. They entertain you with remarks on Hebrew poetry, and the tendency of the Orientals to an inflated rhetoric. They whose notions of theology allow them to think that it is God who speaks in the Bible, have such baby thoughts of Deity, that you can derive no help from them in the way of forming a system that will enable you to tell your neighbour in what way the word of God should be studied.

For reasons such as those we have named, the Bible, as yet, is an absolute chaos. We say that

it consists of two parts, the Old and the New Testaments: we further arrange it perhaps under the heads of ceremonial, historical, prophetic and doctrinal portions: possibly we declare it to be Trinitarian and Calvinistic, but anything much more precise we do not advance. Why, at *irregular intervals*, we light upon a passage, and perceiving analogy between it and other scriptures, we declare it to be a type; why no attempt is made to treat adjoining scriptures in the same way; why we pronounce all scripture to be profitable, and then regard immense tracts as if they were mere lists of names, or fittings for a tabernacle; why, after pronouncing the whole to be pure, we leave unexplained whole chapters that enter into the details of the grossest transactions, or that command the doing of that which we do not believe that it would be proper to do now; why we take considerable parts of the life of Christ as if they had a double meaning, and do not extend this opinion to the whole section; why we consider that the official privileges of the apostles have descended, and that the spiritual graces and faculties mentioned alongside of them, were confined to the apostolic period; why we should pronounce the New Testament to be of moral and doctrinal texture, deal with portions as if they were mystical, yet assign no rule when the one and when the other condition is to be expected; why we should allow the impression to go abroad that the *acts* of the apostles are of the same authority

as their writings; why we should be ready to slip from this predicament when some particular act of obvious faultiness is pointed out; why even then we should propound no general principle on the subject; why we should explain part of the Apocalypse by collating it with Daniel, and other portions by comparing them with Gibbon or Hallam's Middle Ages,—why we should perpetrate these, and a great many other inconsistencies, remains to be explained.

He that would undertake to hold up such facts to the view of any section of the church would not be thanked. He would be met with infinite equivocation. He would be accused of infidel views. Many would not understand what he meant. They who did, would not see that he was actuated by any commendable feelings. Believing that the word of God is lofty science, and that its correct exposition will yet turn out to be the moving principle toward all the sciences: believing that nothing could well be more incoherent or arbitrary than the aspect which the Bible exhibits to mankind: believing that Christ's reproach is yet to be removed, and that Joshua is to be stripped of his filthy garments: considering also that a regular and consistent method of interpreting the Scriptures is a necessary precursor of any such better time, we proceed to throw out some general notices that profess to be means conducting toward the conclusion to which we have just adverted.

I. One of the most general questions that can be raised, is this, What is the TEXTURE of the Bible? Is it one, or is it of many sorts? Although no very precise deliverances have been given out on this head, it has been dealt with *practically* as if there were several soils. Without much pretence at system, nine-tenths were read in the way that they stood; the remainder was viewed as ceremonial or mystical, and was studied by comparing several passages together. The leading personages among the Patriarchs were taken as representative-men, but the other men and incidents by which they were surrounded were left in the letter. In Egypt, Joseph, Moses and Aaron were carried over; but Goshen and Pharaoh and the magicians, the fat and the lean kine, were left in their natural state. In the wilderness, a few prominent scenes were turned into doctrinal matter, but by much the greater part was left unreclaimed; and so of all the other books. Here was a passage that successive authorities had taught us to consider typical: here another that we read as containing a historical statement, from which it was pretended that a moral might be derived: here a third which, although intelligible, was not looked upon as meant for any modern use: here a fourth, that to the eye and ear appeared nothing more than a list of appellatives, and from which it was plain that no nutriment could be got.

As far as there was any general rule for prophecy it seemed to be this, that the prophecies

of the Old Testament had their fulfilment in the events that befel the Jews. Yet even this very general idea was not adhered to. Parts of Daniel and the other prophets were made to coincide with the Apocalypse. The New Testament, on the whole, was represented as doctrinal: yet, there were large deductions from that hypothesis. The parables and many of the acts of Jesus were allowed to have two meanings. Probably Pentecost and its incidents were tacitly regarded as of the like complexion. At every turn in the course of the Epistles you were told that the matter was mystical, and the book of Revelation, although constituting part of the New Testament, was held to be more imbued with that character than any other part of the Bible.

Here, then, was an extraordinary chaos: thrown together on principles that no one pretended to explain, were ceremonial, historical, and mystical portions; passages that were understood, and from which lessons were derived; others, intelligible, but obsolete as regards use; others that yielded no meaning at all. If these portions had even stood off from each other as separate books, there would have been this much of warning to know when to look for one, when for another, the case would not have been so perplexing; but mixed up together, as they are, in the same chapter, verse tenth being of one quality, and verse eleventh of an opposite, the mind that aims at system and science does not know what to think.

It may be all very fine for those who have no other rule but feeling, to give out that there is nothing in all this incompatible with a divine revelation; there are others who possessing sounder intellects cannot be so easily pleased. In the logic of Aristotle, the mathematics of Euclid, the astronomy of Newton, or the political economy of Smith, they have found order; in such books they have seen things assorted. They are not to be blamed if they do not all at once acquiesce in admiring a volume whose literary qualities appear very much below those of mere human productions. A mind in which sentiment predominates cannot discern such an objection. Convinced perhaps in a genuine way of the holiness of the volume, it is in no degree staggered by the miscellaneous nature of its contents. An intelligence that has seen arrangement and symmetry in the works of finite beings may be pardoned if it is shocked by the complete absence of these properties in what professes to emanate from the infinite God.

We, pretending to have been spiritually convinced of the divinity of the message, also venture to declare it to be a book having the unity and regularity that it has been supposed to want. Accepting the greater number of the types that have been already received, attaching to them a meaning similar to that with which they have been endowed, we regard them as standing in the midst of soil of the same substance with themselves. We look upon them as differing in no respect from

the adjacent passages, unless in this, perhaps, that their typicality is more immediately obvious. Between the creation and the flood we are not content to speak of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Enoch and Noah, as symbolic; we see no reason why every incident that happens in their vicinity should not be invested with the same character. From Abraham to the death of Jacob, we do not confine ourselves to the limited number of instances that the church has agreed upon, but put the question, why are those particular men and incidents disjoined from the others around them? From the Exodus to the crossing of Jordan we accept the symbols that have been tendered to us, but inasmuch as no special reason has been assigned why these have been chosen, and the adjoining circumstances omitted; inasmuch also, as we have found that many of these other events are equally capable of being spiritualized, our circle embraces much more than that which was described before. We prolong this mode of reasoning, through the other parts of the Old Testament, demanding all through that every part should be amenable to having the meaning determined by comparison with other parts.

Unless a course such as this be followed we incur difficulties that to the reasoning mind seem insuperable. If the natural is not to be turned into the doctrinal, one cannot see how the Bible should be described as foolishness to the unregenerate man. A person in this state is as competent

as another to read and understand the creation of a material universe, the construction of a tabernacle, the walls, and other such common incidents connected with a particular nation. So long as these retain their ordinary terrestrial character, how shall it be pretended that they are beyond the comprehension of one who is endowed with average powers? He who out of the Bible can comprehend the incidents of a march, a campaign, a pestilence, the erection of a temple, is not to be supposed to lose his power of understanding when the Bible becomes the sphere of observation. But the case is different, if the natural is by comparison, to be turned into the spiritual. There is then a philosophical reason why the man should be at fault. The facts then adduced belong to a life whose hopes and fears and all other characteristics are separated from him by a moral barrier. The canon which apprises me that man in a state of nature is in such a position that he cannot understand the Word of God, must of course apply to the *whole* system. If it does, it entitles me to say, that there can be nothing in the Bible that this sort of man can comprehend. If I see anything there of a different character, anything that is intelligible to nature, I am authorized to argue that it must be dealt with in such a manner as to change its aspect. To impose the principle that fallen man is divided from the Bible by a moral barrier, and then to make the book chiefly consist of circumstances that are on a level with the com-

mon capacity, involves an inconsistency that would be exposed did it show itself in any other sphere but theology.

I am further justified in reading the Bible in the way above alluded to, by another consideration. I am enjoined to excogitate Scripture by *comparison*. But I do not see how I can work this rule, except on the notion that the separate parts of Scripture were of the same texture. If it be morality in one passage, and badgers' skins in another, how can I get them to cohere? If an obscure text turn upon election, how shall I open it by another that treats of the Jewish leprosy? A general order commands me to compare spiritual things with spiritual. As this rule relates to the interpretation of the Bible, it affords me cause for supposing that its contents must be of the specific quality there defined. If, then, I meet with parts of that book that nominally relate to food, clothing, agriculture, and war, I have the right to believe that they are designed to be turned into things of a different order.

Again: on no view that can be taken of Revelation can one have the title to believe that a great part of it should have relation to matters naturally insignificant, such as the petty transactions of nations and individuals that perhaps had not even piety to make them deserving of being rescued from oblivion. Cain's removal to the land of Nod, Esau and his mess of pottage, Lot and his daughters, Hagar's banishment, and thousands of slight

events that run through the whole sacred volume, cannot, if taken in the letter, be reconciled with the character of a divine message. There is another list of passages that enjoin that one man should put another to death,—a circumstance that seems inexcusable under any circumstances, and that, in the actual instances alluded to, appears in the highest degree preposterous. When I meet these scriptures, I cannot believe them to be canonical as they stand. They get that quality when they are so collated as to justify the exercise of destructiveness, not against human life, but against evil passions and impure principles. There is another copious list that commands conduct of a sort quite opposed to that love to mankind which the Scriptures elsewhere enjoin. When such cases are viewed as types, when the Almighty is considered to command violence and unkindness in order emphatically to lead our attention to some very significant principle, his wisdom and goodness are finely vindicated. Whereas, if such Scriptures be taken in the letter, most unworthy notions are countenanced. There are other passages that relate what has no possible connexion with the modern world—texts that tell of the setting up of stones, the formalities connected with a sacrifice or purification, the mode in which an altar was to be reared, or priests breeches to be made. To put a soul into such, it appears indispensable that they should be brought up to the light of some other scriptures. There are chapters

filled with proper names, how this man begot that, and which are chargeable with the peculiarity that they convey no idea. If, by comparing such with other parts of the Bible, mere natural genealogies become the means of apprising us of that chain of circumstances by which true religion is generated, then we can understand the reasons why the terms of this heavenly algebra are scattered through different parts of the Word, and how it should need the influence of his Spirit to teach men how these dispersed members of divine science should be compacted into a system. For the reasons which we have named, we consider that the Bible is of one sort, and that in every case the sense is to be obtained by comparing together passages, none of which separately could teach the doctrine that accrues out of their combined action.

II. Passing from the broad general position that all Scripture is of one quality, and that the rule holds good in regard to every part, that the meaning is to be elicited by comparison, the next question that would arise would be, under what circumstances is that to take place? It might be that there were few, or that there were many lines to be collated. We are not in the position as yet to reply to this with precision. All that we know is, that we have already discovered many circles, and that we have no doubt there are many more. The first chapter of Genesis, it is more than likely, lays off the whole history of man into *seven*

periods. In the first there is a separation between light and darkness. In the second, the waters of heaven are divided from those of earth by a firmament. In the third, the dry land appears, and herbs and grasses grow upon the earth. The fourth is distinguished by the fact, that on it the ordinances of sun, moon, and stars were appointed. The fifth is the era in which the waters teem with life, and in which great whales are created. On the sixth, life commences on the earth with the inferior forms, and as the day proceeds man is made. The seventh is the Sabbath.

If, as we entertain no doubt, these are the great chapters in the moral annals of our species, we meet, exactly where we ought to expect to find it, a great bounding circle that defines all our future enquiries. Here, as in other parts of Scripture, we learn the remarkable fact, that in the history of religion the greater part is taken up with preliminaries, and that it is long before man is formed. We are taught to look for the lapse of *five* periods before the gospel day dawns. Even when it commences, its course is gradual. Although five days fleet past before the epoch of man begins, he does not start rapidly into being in the sixth, but is produced rather toward the close of that time. From this great *horlage* of the church, we likewise learn another truth, which too is taught elsewhere, that the *fifth* period is that in which Satanic influence is most rife.

The first step then, toward a systematic exposi-

tion of the Bible, would be to verify that of which we now speak; to ascertain the great general arrangement given in the first chapter, and to know with precision what was the exact meaning and extent of each of the stages. From Adam to the deluge, would look to be a circle corresponding with the time elapsing from the first to the second advent, because Christ speaks of the flood as if it were the figure of that tide of iniquity that was to sweep over the earth before he should come the second time. From Abraham to Egypt seems possibly to be the same moral era terminating in an event of similar complexion. The forty years in the wilderness, during which the church wanders without advancing, is but another aspect of the same era. The twelve Judges rule Israel in such a manner as to make its history correspond with the prediction of Hosea, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." From David to Babylon, in like manner, is another cycle comprehending that series of declensions and partial reforms that terminate in the reign of thorough confusion. The like event, conjoined with the deliverance from captivity, is described *sentimentally* in the Psalms. Job is a representative-man,

who holds on to his integrity,—is addressed by those whose arguments are not so good as his,—is spoken to by Elihu, (He is my God himself,) —is by him convinced of God's goodness,—lets go his integrity,—arrives at the conclusion, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Although there has been no mention that Job has changed his place, his analogy to the situation of Israel carried into Babylon, is shown in what follows: "And the Lord *turned the captivity* of Job, when he prayed for his friends." Here, in a book that was accepted as the mere life of a patriarch, and that was turned to the bad use of teaching that God would pour down a flood of griefs upon a man perfect in his way, we obtain the history of the church. Legal, yet good in its own estimation, it maintains its own rectitude, is by teachers who are not spiritual plied with arguments that have no power to move it from its position, beholds its case when Elihu holds the mirror up to nature, and tenders that contrition which it had so long refused. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah plainly contain the circle as it were of the sixth day. They conduct the people out of Babylon, they lead them back to Judea, they build the city and temple a second time, they describe the opposition to which the builders are exposed from enemies of different race or tenet. The book of Proverbs, or parables, is not only plainly evangelical, but its

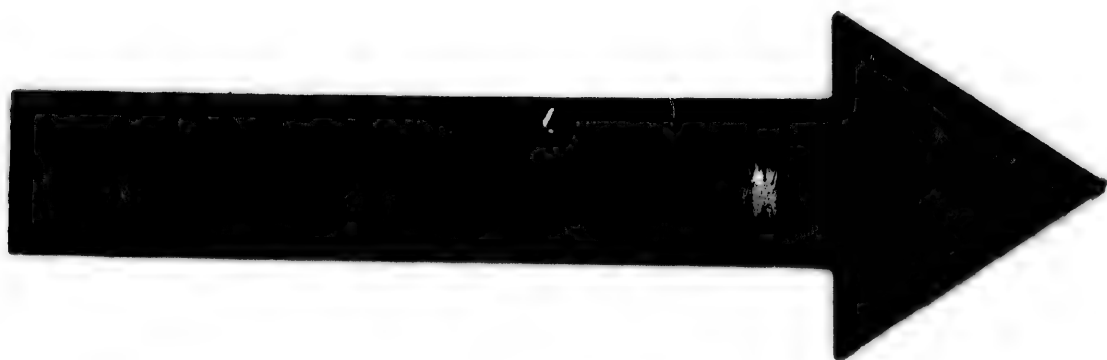
concluding topic is the good woman, the church, that looks well to the ways of her household, and is a crown of glory to her husband. The Song of Solomon no doubt contains the two great aspects of religion, viz., a bride that loses her betrothed for a time, that applies to the watchmen for information, and can get none from them, that finds him again, and being reunited to him, thinks of the condition of her little sister.

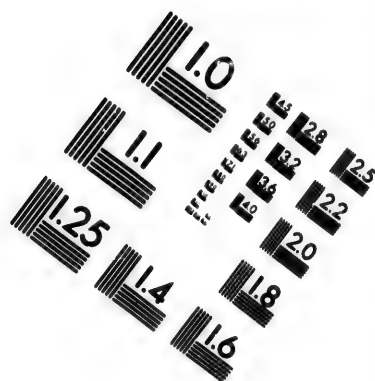
Without speaking very specially, in regard to the prophets, they also reflect two situations, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. From a general recollection, we give it as our impression, that they usually begin with a lament over the present condition of Israel, and finish with great rejoicing based upon their prospect of coming triumph.

The life of Jesus Christ is a similar circle. Born in Bethlehem, exposed to danger in childhood, carried into Egypt, brought back to Nazareth, unknown and without action in his youth, skirting merely the borders of Gentile lands, doing miracles in Jewry, applauded by the people, betrayed by the church, crucified by their rulers, then, after a little while of the tomb, reviving, showing his glorified body—but to the disciples only, conversing with them during a time concerning the things relating to his kingdom, then ascending into heaven: here again we have the two aspects of religion,—the carnal and the spiritual.

The Acts of the Apostles is also a mystic circle. It begins with facts that are just as much *signs* as are any others in Scripture. The cloven tongues, the mighty rushing wind, appertain to an earthly economy: at the second advent, we shall have their spiritual counterparts. This book begins and proceeds with the doings of several of the apostles. At last, the whole merges into the story of Paul; and as the seven churches end in Laodicea, the just people, so this history terminates in Paul the Pharisee. Him it conveys to Rome, and when the curtain drops he is beheld in that city in a sort of imprisonment at large.

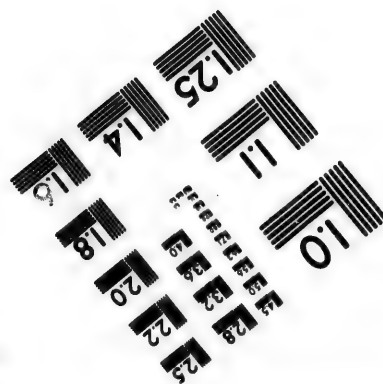
There are *seven* sets of Epistles, addressed to as many races; and these compositions are not only mystical in the circumstance that each race is a moral class, and that seemingly there is an ascending scale, but also in the peculiarity that every part of their contents needs to be resolved by comparison with other portions of the Word. The Epistle to the Hebrews is addressed to those whose name it bears,—to a church of believers. That of James is inscribed to twelve mystical tribes scattered abroad. The first of Peter's two Epistles closes in these words, "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you." The three Epistles of John are obviously the capitals of the pillar, and are plainly addressed to the highest case of Christian faith and practice. The preface to the second Epistle is evidently mystical, and so is the close. The one is, "The elder unto





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the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth:" The other is, "The children of thy elect sister greet thee." The book of Revelation is easily shown to be a circle containing the two phases that we have already referred to. It commences with the story of seven churches, which are all in *Asia*, or the *muddy* state. Ephesus, desirable, in its name and its description suits the apostolic period. Smyrna, myrrh, which is threatened with tribulation ten days, is readily supposed to be that era that was subjected to the cruelty inflicted by Paganism on young Christianity. Pergamos, elevation, that dwells "where Satan's seat is, seems to answer very exactly to the haughty institution that the church became after the time of Constantine. Thyatira, the sacrifice of contrition, aptly expresses the system of will-worship that came in and turned the church into a masquerade. Sardis, the dregs, expresses that singularly dark period that preceded Wickliffe. Philadelphia, the love of a brother or a sister, answers to the reforming time that ran perhaps from 1370 to 1660. Laodicea, the just people, corresponds with the period of conformity and rotary motion that has now lasted for nearly two centuries. To all appearance the line of the churches runs parallel with that of the seven seals, which include the trumpets; and the one is to be investigated by means of the other. The first part of this book, by means of the churches, the seals, and some other machinery, deals with the events of carnal

Christianity: the second portion, which is the shorter, treats of a battle fought and won, the caging of Satan; and the New Jerusalem which comes down from God out of heaven. In addition to cycles of considerable diameter, such as those we have mentioned, it is also plain that wheel within wheel often occurs, and that the life of an individual sometimes affords a portrait in miniature of that which is more largely drawn by the story of the race.

Exposition will deserve to be considered scientific when it shall have determined the number of these circles, great and small. One man will then be able to tell his neighbour in what the study of theology consists. We have ascertained that a given number of wheels compose the mechanism of that book in which God confers with the human race. Each of these, in its own way, tells how the work of redemption is accomplished. Our *system* lies in bringing them all into relation. We find a statement in one: we regard our view as complete when we have traced it through the whole number. When the cogs of all the wheels fit in, we consider that we have arrived at a preconcerted arrangement of the Most High. If the wheels of one sort and another should turn out to be very numerous, as we believe them to be, the results would be derived from a great many directions.

A theological opinion, fully evolved, would mean, a whole made up of a variety of fragments.

Analogies so multifarious combining to form a result so obvious when found, so hard to find, would dispel the notion that it was arbitrary work. It would come to be matter of arithmetical calculation what was the fraction that expressed the improbability that these relations were accidental. It being found that the evidence was stronger than that which determined us in any other case, the reproach would be removed from theology, because it would be shown, that of all sciences it called into exercise the most subtle discrimination, and of all it afforded the amplest and least controvertible proof.

III. The next point to which we refer is one of a more minute sort than the foregoing. If our ideas as to inspiration be erroneous or vague, all our views of the composition and style of Scripture will be affected in proportion. If, like the philologists, we have not the Spirit, and rely on grammar: if, like the evangelical school, our piety does not hinder that we should have the most baby-like notions of a divine message; in either case, we will not credit Scripture with the highest qualities. In the one case, it will be Moses, David or Paul that writes; and in place of the interpretation proceeding on the hypothesis that the reasoning must be divinely close and severe and that the clothing must be supremely suitable and elegant, different expedients will be resorted to. It will be considered that old Hebrews are the persons to be dealt with; and when anything unin-

telligible or peculiar occurs, this will be explained by some accident relating to the man, the time, or the country. In the other case, the mind of the percipient rejecting all that is scientific, will find its own counterpart in that on which it looks; will not be offended by apparent looseness of expression, and instead of clearing up a point by looking far into it, will evade it by some weak sophism. No one but the evangelical man can have any real understanding of the word of God; but if the constitution of *his* mind be singularly narrow and inaccurate, he has the Spirit in such a way that interpretation is not benefited by his influence.

Owing to the essential vice inherent in both these classes of minds, we know of nothing that has been done in the way of exposition that has been at once holy and scientific. When you read the disquisitions of Lowth or Campbell, you feel that the spirit of the Bible is hidden from them; and hence it seems to you more than doubtful if they can offer anything that is really valuable in regard to its letter. When you turn to the comments of Henry, Doddridge or Hawker, you are conscious that it is a pious person who attempts to expound, but you perceive at the same time that he is unable to grapple with a principle, that he cannot follow out a train of reasoning, that he drops the stiches, that he brings out a Bible that is disjointed like his own mind, and that he is offended if you suggest that the Holy Spirit designed anything more precise than he has allowed

for. Let those who wish to examine the truth of this allegation fix upon some passages that have been admitted to be obscure. Let them then turn to one of the evangelical expositors: it is a chance if they will even find the admission that here is a difficulty. It is a certainty that they will see no definite attempt made to solve it. They will probably perceive that some petty *improvement* has been grounded upon the passage in question, and that this, trifling as it is, is improperly annexed to that whose meaning has not been evolved.

Proceeding from such interpretation, incorrect canons have been set up. Thus, one part of Scripture is said to be highly *metaphorical*, and being so, any part which puzzles the interpreter is referred to this fact. Here is a passage that conveys no meaning, or one at least that helps us to no pious conclusion. It is an Eastern mode of expression. It is a bold metaphor, characteristic of the land of the sun. We have investigated a great number of such instances, and have found that the canon was mistaken. High theory, apart from experience, ought to conduct to this conclusion. A divine message should, on *a priori* principles, be absolutely correct. Written by the Being who is emphatically the Spirit of Truth, it ought to be, not an approach to, but the very truth itself. Observation confirms what theory would suggest. Where we have examined these pretended metaphors, we have found that they were so only on the surface. When they were brought into con-

nexion with other scriptures, the figure disappeared, and they turned out to be the most literal statement of a spiritual truth. Thus, the expressions in the nineteenth Psalm—"Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." This is a metaphor only to the eye. When taken into the circulation, it becomes a rigid truth, because it then expresses what shall be fully realized—that the light of divine truth shall pervade the world. There is a scripture which, speaking of the Israelites in the wilderness, says, "they drank of that spiritual rock *that followed them*." Here is an expression that we need to designate a bold metaphor, unless we discern the absolute truth which it symbolizes, namely, that in the wanderings of the Israel of the New Testament, the waters of divine truth follow them. Sometimes, as in the last case, the metaphor is not so much bold as it is *mixed*, combining two incongruous ideas, and producing a result that is, rhetorically speaking, defective. Our interpreters would think it wrong to see such cases: they would think it right, if the discrepancy was pointed out, to deny that it was so. We have analyzed a sufficient number of bold and mixed metaphors to be able to say, without hesitation, that they are made so, not by a Hebrew accident, but by the careful forethought of the Spirit that

worketh all and in all. They are rendered thus glaring, thus bizarre, with the wise and benevolent design of drawing attention to the thought over which they are drawn. We have verified this already in such a number of cases, that we impose it as our canon, that when any passage is led up to the analogy of the faith, the simile disappears, and an idea emerges that is spiritually and severely just.

Again: It is among the rules of criticism, that the Bible contains *hyperbole* and pleonasm, and it is an admitted principle that these anomalies are to be accounted for by local and temporary peculiarities. Like others, we began by believing this: we have ended by deeming it a fallacy, the result of imperfect analysis, and very detrimental to the truth. These features have been principally attributed to what are called the poetical books,—Job, the Psalms, and the Prophets. In this case too we pretend to have made numerous enquiries. The result is, that we have been struck with the complete incorrectness of the principle. Those instances where there appears to be repetition, or tautology, are always found to be cases where two or more aspects of one thought are held up to view, or examples where the idea is put both in a figurative and in a direct manner. This is so frequent a circumstance, that one cannot turn to a page of any of these books without meeting an instance. So far from tautology being the effect, one feels that the second clause comes

in with divine delicacy and subtlety to fix the meaning of that which would have been ambiguous without this explanation. As to hyperbole, it is chargeable enough on the passages in question, if the literal reading be followed. Thus, if the imagery of the eighteenth Psalm is all to be applied to the petty history of the natural David, it needs all that can be alleged in reference to Oriental warmth to enable us to accept it: If the various bold metaphors used in the 114th Psalm are supposed to be completely absorbed and taken up by the passing out of Egypt: If the 68th Psalm is to be devoted to nothing higher than the events of the wilderness and the entering into Canaan, then the term hyperbole has been rightfully applied to the Bible. Such difficulties are fully obviated by substituting the spiritual for the natural; in which way, the description ceases to be exaggerated, and becomes the fittest possible exponent of the thought which it represents.

There is another characteristic predicated of Scripture, and sophistically accounted for. It is described as *fragmentary*. Nowhere has this quality been supposed to reside more fully than in the discourses of Christ. God assumes a human form, and speaks fitfully to his disciples. We do not allege that this is an impossible supposition, but it looks very unlikely. Here is a being whose mind might be expected to be the perfection of system. He speaks those things that are to be the study of his people to the end of time. On

such a theme, on such occasions, one might properly look for extreme accuracy. But it turns out that they are unconnected, and the solution of this is given in the circumstance, that what we have is as connected as could be looked for from the situation of the Apostles who heard and recorded. The Holy Spirit, having the range of the universe, could contrive it no better than this, that the most important of sayings were pronounced under such inauspicious conditions, and in the presence of such imperfect auditors, that the churches have been furnished with but a partial statement of what was uttered. Here too we disallow the theory in all its extent. It does the greatest injustice to that which it professes to solve. We have explored some part of this territory also, and can speak from experience of what it contains. In twenty instances at least we have canvassed passages that are arranged as if they stood off from each other, and have found a subtle and beautiful link that really joined them. So often has this happened to us, that we pronounce unhesitatingly against the decision above mentioned. Nothing that we have seen, in the way of connexion, exceeds the closeness by which the thoughts are conjoined in the discourses of Christ. Wherever we have examined, the difficulty has consisted in supplying a member that was intentionally omitted, but which was suggested at once by what preceded and by what followed.

Thus, we consider that vast injustice has been

done to the word of God by unspiritual or weak commentators, who have pretended to lay down rules for its exposition. When they have represented it as metaphorical, pleonastic, tautological, or fragmentary; when they have explained these defects by attributing them to the human conduits through which it reached the earth, they have done it egregious injustice. When the Bible relates the manner of its inspiration, it does not seem to confound the message with the messenger, "Unto whom it was revealed, that *not unto themselves*, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;" and cases are mentioned in which it is plain that the prophet did not understand the nature of his own communication. In violating this principle, indescribable wrong has been inflicted on the word of God. In speaking of itself, it says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." But if they who stand between it and the human race describe it as imperfect in many respects; if they show it up as containing faults from which the compositions of many mortals are exempt, how shall we realize it as the august transcript of Him who made heaven and earth?

The church is rent into many sects that dislike each other. The members of these are, with few exceptions, persons that feel no real interest in religion. We are many in name; we are unre-

generate in character. A mode of exposition of the sort that we have alluded to, furnishes an explanation of all this. It is not to be anticipated that Satan should be driven out of the earth by a system of theology that asks that we should step in and apologize for its amiable weaknesses. The "cherub that covereth" is not to be outgeneraled by a hypothesis that believes in certain old Hebrews who, with some concurrence on the part of God, composed a volume that, on the whole, is sacred and designed to regenerate men, although in some places it is turgid, in some paraphrastic, in some capricious and fitful, and in some unintelligible.

IV. Another question that concerns the exposition of Scripture is this, What is the relation that the Bible holds to *science*? Does it abstain from any mention of subjects of this kind,—does it speak of them in a general way, so as to impose no principle,—or are its notices of such a kind as that they lay down cardinal doctrines? We incline to consider that the last supposition is that which expresses the truth. The considerations that dispose us to entertain this idea are such as the following: It is plain that the Bible, if it be anything, is a message direct from God to his creatures; it is also plain that in this book there are frequent allusions to the phenomena of mind and matter. But if these occur, how far is it probable that they should be of a kind that is not scientific? This book, speaking of the Godhead,

uses the language, "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." But the Bible is in an eminent sense a revelation of the doings of the Godhead: how far is it likely that, disclosing the sacred purposes of these three, it should withhold the mention of the wisdom and knowledge that are connected with them. The revealed recipe for getting wisdom is to ask of God; but if he bestows it as he promises to do, does he so give it as that it runs only in one direction? Is it a fair and candid thing to restrict the general term wisdom to a mere acquaintance with theology? It is said, concerning all who keep God's commandments, that they have a good understanding: Why should this quality be viewed as having but one line and object? In speaking of gifts that flow from the Spirit, the Bible says, "To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge by the same spirit." Surely there seems more likelihood that these terms are meant to stretch out to their full capacity, rather than that they are designed to be contracted to express theology only. The Bible is very frequent in its statements that all things are made by the same God who is its author: Is it probable then that his references to his own works will be otherwise than scientific? The Scriptures often declare that God refuses no good gift to them that love him: If such be the case, shall not the pursuit of divine things conduct to science, which is surely a good gift? The knowledge of God,

through the Christian religion, is the greatest attainment that a human being can reach: but if faith necessarily conducts to this, why should it not be supposed to take up, as it wends on its way, the smaller facts that are comprehended in what we call science?

Of the two departments of mind and matter that are considered as making up science, the first is by much the most important; but the Christian religion stands connected with mind at every point. All its conquests are of a mental kind. It is said of the model personage, that he knew what was in man. All these circumstances infer, that religion is at least intimately conjoined with mental science; and if with it, with by much the most important of the two branches. I am told to go forth and evangelize the world: this idea, decomposed, implies that I am to go and prevail over mind; and this involves that I should have a masterly knowledge of that which I am commanded to sway.

Here then is one half of science, that appears, by necessity, to fall within the compass of revelation. In regard to matter, the other half, we can, in the mean time, allege, that it has this much of connexion with the Bible,—that the outward world is employed as a symbol of the unseen world. In this capacity, if in no other, the allusions to it must be frequent: Is it to be supposed that these will not be of a scientific nature? Is it likely that the material world should be alluded to some hun-

dred times perhaps, and yet that all these passages put together will not amount to the propounding of some one leading principle?

In a more general way, it is certainly the office of religion to render a man master over passion; to teach him to apply his mind to what is of consequence; to strengthen his powers in the ratio that the spirit of truth is superior to the spirit of error. A being thus directed and strengthened, is he not to be looked upon as placed in a truer relation to science, even if he should not be able to point to any particular truths as derived through the medium of revelation. The believer must contemplate that he is called upon to enter into discussion with those who will derive their objections to revelation from mental or material science. Must he rest satisfied, through the whole coming discussion, to pray to be excused from entering upon such subjects? Shall his neighbour, who has a knack, be continually superior to him in these departments? Must the Christian, as at present, confine himself to assuring his antagonist that if he would only look into his heart he would find a great deal of the truest wisdom there? God enjoins his people to spiritualize the earth. He therefore contemplates that they will come into collision with men of all kinds. He therefore appoints that they will meet the scientific person. But if he predicts that they shall prevail, he designs to supply the means that they shall not be worsted in the encounter. Does not this supply

a general argument why, in acquiring godliness, it should be looked for that the Christian is, by some means, put into an advantageous position as regards science?

Finally: It may be alleged, that there is a number of instances in which Scripture makes notices of facts pertaining to mind and matter that deserve to be viewed as scientific. One passage speaks of his stretching "out the north over the empty place and hanging the earth upon nothing," which surely, if it means anything, means this, that the suspension of the earth in vacuum is affirmed,—a principle that probably involves its rotundity, and the mode by which it is kept in its place. Another scripture appears to describe the circular course of the winds,—a feature that we had remarked before we heard of the modern theory: "The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits." If this passage seems to contain the rotary course of the wind, the next looks as if it set forth the doctrine of *evaporation*: "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." The next text might, without undue fancy, be conceived to contain the *gaseous* doctrine, at least when the literal sense is taken: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do ap-

pear." When it is said, "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world," there seems to be a classification of the powers of human nature into propensities, perceptive and thinking faculties. When in another place we see the expression, "Even their mind and conscience is defiled," we consider that we are allowed to suppose that a classification of the mental powers into intellectual and moral is designed.

When the theory has gone so decidedly against the expectation of finding science in the Bible, it is not surprising that it has not been discovered, even supposing it to be there. For reasons such as those we have adduced, we incline to believe that at least the general principles will be ascertained to be promulgated by the word of God. They who have hitherto applied themselves to the investigation of *mind* have had so little success, that, after performing many revolutions, they have recently come round to a foolish Platonic principle, propounded many centuries ago. They could not therefore affirm that help from revelation would be thrown away upon them. The examiners of *matter* consider that their enquiries have been attended with much success, at least in the last two centuries. Even among them the progress is full of difficulty, and constantly liable to be impeded. To have the divine Word coming in to the rescue, would certainly invest religion with addi-

tional dignity, would unquestionably hurry forward the progress of knowledge, and might be an eminent instrument in realizing those prodigious results that prophecy conjoins with the circumstances of the latter day,—results that we must feel are not attainable by present agencies and modes of progression.

V. Another point that we consider to be very essential toward a correct mode of interpreting the Word is that the method should be *esoteric*. This truth is taught in the well known passage in Peter, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The same idea is contained in this other text, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." It is also propounded in an expression in Romans, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion (analogy) of faith." This doctrine would seem to flow from the *high theory* of the subject.

If the Scripture be the words of Divinity, its texture must be quite peculiar. Being so, it does not seem natural that any thing but itself should be the interpreter. To call in foreign aid looks as if we called upon something else than God to in-

form us what God meant. This principle has not been altogether lost sight of. That limited amount of comparisons that have been made, and that are authorized in our evangelical commentaries, have been obtained in consequence of proceeding on this doctrine. Those analogies that such men as Henry and Doddridge have pointed out, have been found by acting on this idea. Still, it has not been stringently managed. No rigorous attempt has been made to carry it out to the regularity of a system. What man ever heard of a set of rules informing us how Scripture was to be collated, and how many analogies were necessary before it could be considered that a truth had been arrived at? To have thrown the thoughts in any direction so precise as this, would have been regarded as offering an affront to the Divine Word.

On the other hand, while a few pious persons have done a little in the way of eliciting the sense of Scripture by means of comparing it with itself, the method by much the most general has been to collate it with external objects. We cannot better illustrate this than by referring to Bishop Newton's work on prophecy,—in which, if we remember aright, the prophets of the Old Testament are tested by any secular writers who flourished at or about their time, and the prophets of the New Testament are illustrated by means of Josephus, Tacitus, Gibbon, Hallam, and Hume. In this case, we have a flagrant exemplification of the principle which we deprecate. In fact, whenever

a passage more than commonly obscure confronts the critic, he gets rid of it in this way, by connecting it with some real or fancied peculiarity of the time or country to which it belongs.

Thus Scripture has in a few instances, and without a regular method, been subjected to an evangelical way of interpretation, by which means any holy ideas that we entertain in regard to it have been procured. Much more frequently it has been exposed to the other method, that has pretended to discover explanations in the events of profane history, in the habits of different countries, in the phenomena of natural history, or in the peculiarities of language. Consequences, ludicrous and abominable, have been the result. By this means the seven churches in Asia, instead of affording us the stages of the gospel church, have been explained by the events that befell, or are supposed to have befallen, actual Ephesus, and Sardis, and Laodicea. By this means the influence in the Apocalypse, whose power is in its tail, is explained by gunpowder and artillery; the horsemen, in the same book, by the Saracens; the false prophet, by Mahomet; the seven hills, by Rome; the beast, by the Papistry.

Having, during several years, been persuaded that the esoteric is the only right method, we have subjected to it parts of Scripture that had been left in a state of nature, and have found it possible to discover manifold analogies between them and other portions. We have applied the

principle to a multitude of texts that had virtually been considered to have no meaning, and have seldom seen it fail to bring out a solution that was at once orthodox and palpable. We have taken the method up to such passages as those that we exemplified in Revelation, and have obtained from them ideas that threw much light on doctrine and the coming history of the church. By means of this calculus, we have turned the seven churches and the seven seals, into seven stages of the Christian church, preceding the breaking up of the bad era. What was explained as incursions of Goths and Ottomans, we have rendered into invasions of spurious principles; the false prophet, we have discovered in the influence that perverts Scripture and prophecy; Babylon, we have found to mean a state of confusion, consequent upon ceremonies and discordant opinions; the drying up of the river Euphrates, we explain as the removal of those causes that have given security to Babylon; the slaying of the witnesses, the retirement of the woman into the wilderness, the prevalence of the beast,—which three phenomena take place in contiguous chapters, and are each described as lasting during the same period of forty and two months,—these we have interpreted as three different phases of the empire of evil. In all future time we consider that the mind of the Spirit can be unwrapped by no other method. Feelings and experiences, suggested to the believer on the walk

of faith, by the Spirit of God, these things prompting him to enquiry, this enquiry finding parts of Scripture that correspond and unite together to compose a new truth, such, we believe is the divine method.

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LECTURE VI.

THE SECOND TEMPLE, OR THE CHURCH OF THE LATTER DAYS.

UNLESS we thought we had something new to offer, we would not write on this subject. In the estimation of some, the era that unites within itself the many great properties that are assigned to some time or other, is *the future state*. This is an easy theory, which proposes to reach a condition of ultimate blessedness by a life of no very peculiar eminence, terminated by the usual circumstance of the dissolution of the body.

I read of a time in which men are to be placed in a condition widely different from that which they now occupy; I look at it with the feelings wherewith the lover of romance contemplates some Utopia or Arcadia, that the fancy of musing bard has conjured up; I feel that the view solicits me to pursue a holy life, but I do not perceive that I can do anything to hasten or insure the result.

In the estimation of others, the scene to which these great descriptions are applicable, is to be

realized on this earth. But before it comes on, there is to be a change in the economy. Jesus, attended by the holy angels, is to appear on the scene; the legions of darkness are to fly before him, and virtue is to gain the day, not because there is any element, at present in existence, that is able to change the state of the world, but because after men have, for a given time, battled with evil, without much coming of it, a superior power interposes.

Metaphysically speaking, there is a difference between these ideas. Practically considered, the difference is small, if any. They both agree in believing, that from our present Christianity, as revealed in the Bible, it would be impossible to draw out forces that would give birth to the era in whose advent they nevertheless repose trust. They both concur in the opinion, that men are to have no direct share in realizing that which shall be Paradise when it comes.

In mentioning these two classes, we probably exhaust the subject. There are, probably, tendencies in being, out of which another class may yet arise, but hitherto they have not cohered into any definite form or course of action. Persons belonging to this category might be conceived to argue in the following manner. The powers of the Christian religion, so far from being fully tested, have, as yet, scarcely been brought into operation. So far back as the days of Noah, it was predicted that ungodliness should deluge the earth,

and the resemblance between the two periods has been brought into notice by the remarks of Christ. Jacob, too, when he was a dying, foretold that evil, beginning with the first of his twelve sons, should go on augmenting. "Reuben thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power; unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defilest thou it; he went up to my couch." Wrong doing, commencing with the first of these representative men, seemingly reaches its acme in Dan, of whom it is said, "Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." Between this, and the lamentable complaint of the church in Revelation, there is a visible analogy. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

They who maintained the argument in question would farther allege, that this doctrine of declension is taught in the circumstance, that the people, after they had entered Canaan, under Joshua, fell away in the time of the Judges. "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and

all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel. And Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash. And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers, and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." Our reasoners might contend that the like truth came out from the events that occur under the Kings. Evil which had evinced itself under Solomon attained to a great height under Rehoboam, and continues on with partial reforms until the nation is carried away into Babylon.

Thus it would be argued, that the Old Testament contains several circles, from each of which this truth can be derived. Turning to the New Testament, it might be argued that it likewise affords many situations that give out the same idea. Thus the Disciples say to Jesus, "Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" In answer to the question, he speaks of wars and rumours of wars, of pestilences, famines, and earthquakes, of false Christs, of times so pernicious, that unless they were shortened, there should no flesh be saved, of doctrines so false and delusive, that, if it were possible, they should

deceive the very elect. On another occasion, he says, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Paul is very express to the same effect, "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself, above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Not to mention particularly the perilous times spoken of in Timothy, the rich men in James, the false teachers in Peter, the Antichrist of John, the wicked race so fully drawn by Jude, two-thirds of the Apocalypse are devoted to this subject. The churches, seals, trumpets, and vials, the fate of the two witnesses, the flight of the woman, the sway of the beast, the rule of Babylon, these events occupying twenty out of twenty-two chapters, all point in the same direction, and tell of a wicked era that was to last time, times, and a half.

They whom we represent then, would argue that there is an obvious reason why the force of revealed religion should not be considered to have been tested. The period at which we are looking all falls within the scope of the circles to which we have pointed. There is a necessity why this must be so. Inasmuch as it has never occurred to the church at any point, from the time of the Apostles to the present hour, to look at the cir-

cumstances to which we have adverted, it must still be under their pressure. As it cannot be conceived that the church can have escaped out of a condition, of whose existence it is not aware, it is therefore the fairest of conclusions that it is still in it. At a time when religionists, all the while that they are mere whited sepulchres, are boasting of their privileges and their attainments, it cannot be supposed that Joshua has parted with his filthy garments, or that men have got rid of that veil of a covering that should be over all nations. Before it has occurred to professing Christians to understand that the dry bones are the whole house of Israel, that the entire nation was led into captivity, and that as regards the beast, it is said of him, "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" before any part, even of the visible church, have apprehended the meaning of these situations, there is no room for supposing that they have emerged out of them. Wickedness, vast, deep, all-pervading, must be seen in order to be expunged. A community which in place of perceiving that it is the counterpart of a hundred frightful descriptions given by the Lord's prophets, is fully convinced that its condition is, morally speaking, auspicious, cannot

have comprehended these delineations, and therefore cannot have washed itself from the pollution that they mention.

They whom we would represent, then, see no difficulty in the way of reaching the glories of the latter day, by means of the system contained in the Bible. They do not require to suppose that Canaan is the *disembodied* state, nor yet, that in order to come at it, there must be a visible apparition of the Saviour. They see that there are incredible untried powers residing in the Christian religion, and therefore that there is no cause why other fancied expedients should be resorted to. They perceive that there is an adequate explanation of the whole career through which the Church has passed, and the situation which it now occupies. Nine-tenths of the Bible have received no explanation. The system of doctrine that has been formed on the small patch that has been cultivated, is defective both in quantity and quality. It is corrupted in being mixed up with ceremonies; it is split up into a variety of contending sects; it admits of no one high view; it refers all lofty promises to the apostolic period; it does not allow that one man can do anything palpable to help his neighbour. They, whose position we seek to occupy, believing that there is in the moral world a system of exact causation, see no difficulty in accounting for what has been, and for what is to happen. The past history of the church contains no remarkable doings since the age of the

Apostles, and that not because of unknown reasons, but on this account, that in direct fulfilment of prophecy, such opinions came in as rendered it impossible that religion should flourish. The future annals of the church are to be crowded with splendid events, and here too, there is prophecy, here there is causation. The coming time is to be glorious, not only because it has been predicted, but because there are agencies that can be named beforehand, that shall come into play.

In the degree that there is an interval between men going forth to sprinkle their fellows with water, and their baptizing them into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in that extent, is there a notable distance between what has been and what shall be done. In the degree that there is a difference between the statements, I can do nothing in the way of converting my neighbour, and the other, that all the miracles that the Lord Jesus wrought on blind, deaf, possessed, and dead, are only signs of "the greater things" that he has commanded me to perform, in all that vast extent is there room for change.

The point contemplated, then, in those scriptures that relate the circumstances of the latter day, will be reached by a generation that will hold tenets of the kind that we have named. They will believe that it is to be realized on the earth, and that it is to be unwrapped from the energies of the very gospel that we have possessed for centuries. They will point to the precise opinions

and practices that have hindered progress hitherto. They will show where and how they began, in what manner they advanced, and to what height they reached. They will define the very particulars, that in the meantime, at least, shall enter into the new system. They will show that the new will not differ from the old, in the sense that it will reject every element that composed the former system, but that as the second temple was partly reared out of the ruins of the first, so will the improved version of Christianity retain many great leading principles recognized by that which it supercedes.

That Christianity, after it has so long disappointed all expectation, should be spoken of as that which is to put forth extraordinary energies, is an affirmation calculated to arouse vast opposition. The sceptic will think himself peculiarly entitled to disbelieve at this point, seeing that he will find his doubts sanctioned by that very religionist who usually opposes him. In reply to such inward temptations, let us bear in mind that the emergency has been foreseen. At the very outset of the Bible we are admonished to recollect that five days of preliminaries elapse before man is made. Sarah, an admitted type of the church, laughs incredulously at the prediction, that she should bear a son, and the prophecy was accomplished against the prescribed order of nature. The growth of religion is represented as being as a root out of a dry ground. The story of Israel

points to the good period occurring at the end of their annals, and after they have run through many vicissitudes and seasons of alienation from God. Peter touches on this very theme. He represents men as feeling strong objections to this scheme. "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." So, then, we do not affirm that the prospect is a natural one, and that there is no *appearance* of reason why men should not discredit it. What we do allege is, that Scripture has foreseen, and has provided against the difficulty by supplying a great many passages that are really answers to it.

In what follows, our endeavour shall be to notice some of the very numerous features that Holy Writ assigns to the church of the latter days.

One of these is UNITY. When they are rearing Babel the speech is confounded, so that one man ceased to be able to understand his neighbour. When they are slaying Christ, they "parted his garments, casting lots." Perhaps it should be added that when the Spirit descended at Pentecost it was with the appearance of "cloven tongues." At all events, from near the commencement of our religion to the present hour, the disposition has been for religion to branch off into a variety of conflicting opinions. As sad a circumstance as any connected with this fact is this, that we

reason down to it. We say that as men are constituted, with dissimilar characters, it is to be looked for that their views of religion should be as various as their minds. We make the remark, that intelligence and freedom are promoted by competition. We have the disunion, and what is worse, we have theories to prove that it is a fortunate arrangement. Yet Scripture speaks of "One Lord, one faith, one baptism:" it represents the Saviour as putting up the petition "That they all may be one." In speaking of the Spirit it is very express in distinguishing between variety of manifestation and unity of nature,—“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit: and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord: and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.” This unity, which in such passages is described as properly belonging to Christianity, is spoken of as attained by the church of the latter days. “Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice: with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”

Thus, that is contemplated which we have never yet beheld. But if a result is predicted that is different from what the world has yet seen, to the mind of the reasoner that is as much as to announce the coming in of new agencies. Human beings, who have never before concurred, are to be of one mind in regard to religion. But this end must be reached by means, and by such as

are different from any that have obtained before. If it was a uniformity, in which knowledge had no place, the road to it would not be hard to find. But, as we are informed it is to co-exist along with knowledge which far transcends anything that has been realized before, it must be travelled to along the route of new ideas. Among the means that will assist in leading to this object will be this,—our creed must contain no *indifferent* or *secondary* matters. Philosophically considered, how should a system in which Divinity is present, include any such? How should a plan, brought into existence by the death of the Son of God, have among its materials elements that may be taken in various ways? The presence of such things in existing creeds is the fertile source of diversity. Men commence by saying they are not of vital consequence; they end by regarding them as the only points entitled to interest.

Before the predicted unity can be attained, we must get rid of architecture. The terms of salvation must be restricted to tenets in which difference is not supposable. Here is our belief. We do not say that you may take it in this way or that. This is what we affirm: that unless you embrace all matters contained in it, you declare that the Spirit of God and of truth is not in you. To *begin* a system on the notion that it permits latitude, is to end in diversities and errors that God only can see the termination of.

To shut out occasions of difference, it will be

necessary that our belief should have regard to no point except such as, according to our very theory, admits of no dispute. In journeying toward unity it will also be necessary that our theology should comprise no element that appeals to the merely animal. Where a creed combines certain externals with its doctrines, there can be no close work. Its abettors perhaps lay it down as a canon, that the one set of particulars is as momentous as the other. But they are afraid to keep up to this statement. They are not able to induce many to receive it in its rigour. The consequence is, that a fast and loose mode gets admission. As many as are willing to attach the utmost sanctity to the outward institution, are heartily received and praised. They who are willing to comply with it in a less exact way, are not rejected.

Thus, various weights and measures come into use, and it is impossible to erect an exact standard, because mankind would not brook it, and because to do so would bring into too glaring a light the essential absurdity of the ceremony. Besides, carnalities draw around religion a base multitude that has no part or lot in the matter. The teacher, sharing with the rabble in a reverence for the "bodily exercise," does not institute a close or impartial search into the character of his auditory. They flock eagerly to something. What that is they are not careful to enquire. Because hundreds repair to the appointed centre, the "masters of assemblies," pleased with the assemblage, do not

look curiously into motives. They give the animal what it wants: they keep up a constant fire of very harmless musquetry about some persons who deceive themselves, and about ordinances not possessing a saving influence. That they speak in this way satisfies themselves of their sincerity, and it is so very general that it creates no offence, but rather gives the congregation the impression that their pastor is very pious.

Further: In order to unity, we must have no unsound doctrines mixed up with our creed. The most correct set of opinions that the world has yet seen has carried ideas along with it that were subversive of its other parts. By telling men that they were forbidden to judge; by representing charity as consisting in drawing a veil over truth, it does what it can to prevent them from thinking correctly in reference to what happens without. By permitting them to believe that one may be converted without knowing it, it gives them an opportunity for entertaining most erroneous notions as to what happens within.

Again: In order to reach unity, it will be necessary that some certain method be procured for interpreting Scripture. The evils that afflict the church may be represented as the result of prophecy, or as showing themselves in the form of a low standard of morality. They may be described as justly as arising out of *want of method*. If Scripture be not an ordinary book; if it be declaredly composed in such a manner as that the

natural man cannot understand it, we ought to be told what manner that is. If we learn from the Bible itself that its truths are to be elicited by *comparison*, there ought to be fixed canons informing us under what conditions we should compare. Holy Writ, according to the general principle, consisting of ideas that are *fractional* when viewed separately, we should be instructed by what particular process the *Mosaic* should be united. Of how many pieces does a canonical principle consist? How many circles are there comprised in the Bible? When have I scriptural authority to conclude that I have attained such a result as ought to command credence? It is obvious that all such questions as these must be settled. The greater part of religionists are not aware even of this general canon. The most evangelical would refuse to allow it to be said that there was such a fixed rule. To impose even the principle, that it was by comparing different parts of Scripture that a result should be reached, would appear too stringent. It would be viewed with fear and jealousy, as an attempt to shackle the spirit. The general canon should be laid off into its component parts. If we are to compare, there must be a *mode* prescribed. What is it? If the Bible be the scattered members of thought, there must be an assignable number requisite to compose a complete idea. What is that number?

In this way, all that is weak and bad may be referred to want of science. In place of content-

ing ourselves with the bare statement that our condition is owing to the will of God,—a truth so self-evident that only religionists could be guilty of the weakness of naming it,—we would be able to offer a more precise explanation. We are in a condition, as regards theology, like to that which we have occupied in relation to several other branches. We do not understand its rationale. We are like early settlers, who, ignorant of the rules of agriculture, live chiefly on spontaneous vegetation. We are not then constrained to call in a mystery, and to refer our situation to the inexplicable dealings of the Most High. It proceeds from lack of wisdom. It is referable to the fact that we cannot read the book that contains in its pages the means of curing the long leprosy under which the human race has laboured.

Unity in theology, as in other sciences, would come when it ought to come,—when a method of such grand perspicuity had been realized as in a drastic manner would overcome the resistance of pretended reasoners. He that is with us is described as being stronger than he that is against us. If so, his strength must evince itself in some assignable way, and either by the Bible, or without the Bible. But if it be by the Bible, as we know it is, the contents of that book must be disposed in such a form as to display strength. If they do not present this attitude now, it must be because they have not been adjusted according to the method designed to show strength. It is no

new thing for a science to be in a situation in which each person who investigated it *had a way of his own*. In such cases, there was room for that same complaint of want of unity that we hear made in relation to theology. The change came about, not in consequence of a miracle, but by the coming in of a method. Certain connexions were discovered. These gave rise to the imposing of laws, by the following out of which, so sure a way was found out that at last all disunion disappeared.

Another feature of the victorious church is **THE DISTINCT CHARACTER OF ITS MEMBERS**. This is intimated in the following description: "In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you." The like thought seems to be propounded also in this other prophecy, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach. In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel."

At present, Christians are known by the circumstance whether they comply with certain test acts in use in the several sects. The females and the infirmer males submit; the bulls of Bashan, or the able-bodied members, *fine off*, and are just

as well esteemed. As to be a Christian on these terms infers no praise, and not to be one infers no obloquy, husbands and fathers get their wives and daughters to do their religion, feeling, naturally enough, that it is as well to have Christianity somewhere about the house. The head of an establishment, in a complimentary way, admits that the first clerk has all the piety that is connected with his firm, and as he gives him a pinch out of his box, promises to go some day and hear his minister. The comfortable master of a house, as he sips port with a friend after dinner, confidentially reveals to him that he fully believes that there never was a more devout Christian than his Sarah, and that he finds it wont do for him to continue his practice of swearing. Persons are Christians much as they are free-masons. One man asks his neighbour if he be a mason, and says, that as for himself he has long intended to become one, but somehow or other he has never got *made*. Or, do you go to the Sacrament? Well, now, I envy you; it is a very solemn duty, and I've neglected it too long.

There are palpable causes in being why we cannot have a strong Christian. Prophecy very distinctly proves this when it makes mention of Christ proposing the question, But when the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth? But it is to be otherwise when the church victorious appears. The piety of the believer shall then become conspicuous. In order to this, it

must take on new influences. When we hear, then, of this peculiarity of the future, the practical mind will do more than look. It will ask, What are the means towards this end? It will consider that it is weak impertinence in it to gaze at the result, unless it follows this up by adopting measures for reaching it. If religion shall attract the notice of the bystander, I peremptorily desire to know what prevents it from doing so now, and what improvements and additions will cause it to perform what prophecy refers to?

Another feature of the good time is **RAPID CONVERSION**. "Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." "I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day."

It is notorious that religion does not act in this way at present. It does not convert, and more than this, it is ready with reasons why it should not do so. It has a way of using "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase," so as to excuse itself from being pushed on this subject. The current theology makes it impiety to put the question, Why the teaching of religion is not followed by conversion? and piety for the pastor or professor to repudiate the idea that he is entitled to expect this result. There is no doctrine more frequently avowed by the evangelical class than that which would represent the church as an

agent that has no assignable or necessary connexion with the conversion of the sinner. They tell you that this is the way to ascribe glory to God; whereas, if there be no good done, there is room for the question, What glory is there in the case? This is a refinement in hypocrisy and wickedness. We claim power and the respect of men. We urge our apostolic descent. We demand that it should be considered that we are Divine in our scaffolding. If these pretensions are not conceded, we fill the land with tumult. The only thing that we do not ask, is the right to do good. *That*, by reasoning as weak as the feeling that prompts it is contemptible, we palm off upon God. It is obvious, that in the verse quoted above, there is a connexion made between the church and the regeneration of the world,—“as soon as *Zion* travailed, she brought forth her children.” Practically considered then, before this conclusion can be reached, there must be a new theory. With that which now obtains, a result cannot be produced. Repudiating agency, there is no room for wonder why we do not do the things predicted of the latter day.

Another characteristic is, that religion shall draw the attention of HIGH INTELLIGENCE. “Thus saith the Lord, the labour of Egypt, and merchandize of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, *men of stature*, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine; they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto

thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God." One part of this promise refers to men of stature. It has not been the fate of the gospel hitherto to interest such. It was so exhibited as to say to them that the article in which they dealt was of no account in the eye of religion. It was so managed as to make it appear that there was a bonus on weakness. All passages that were capable of such a meaning, when taken literally, were applied in this way. It was hard to bear. To be told to walk in shackles: to be informed that what you valued the most was a positive barrier in the way of your soul's salvation: to be given to understand that those whom you regarded as the narrowest and least agreeable are, because of these very peculiarities, more in the way than you, of interesting the Deity, it was a distasteful representation. It may be said, why should not men of genius have taken the trouble to enquire for themselves? If they had the most mind, why should they have tamely submitted to receive from their inferiors their impressions of revelation? We do not exonerate them. All that we contend for is, that they have been much sinned against. Religion contains elements that render it essentially distasteful to nature. But it remains to be seen whether it may not be represented in such a way as to impart to it adventitious causes of displeasure.

If a man is invited to embrace religion on the

correct principle that it asks of him that he love the Lord his God with his whole soul and mind and strength; if, when appalled by this demand upon him, he is further given to understand that the business of religion mainly consists in performing oblations, and observing times, and that the nature with which the Eternal feels the warmest sympathy is that which contains the least faculty; if such be the treatment that a clever person receives from theology, it is not wonderful that he will seldom entertain it. It has been associated with *foreign* elements, and thus has been made more than necessarily disagreeable. If in the future time a class of men are to join the gospel that rejected it before, there must be *reasons* for this. In order to suit them it can never be that Christianity can change its cardinal conditions. It can never let men off with less than the whole heart. But then it may abstain from bringing forward absurd accessories. We know that eventually the truth shall attract the regards of persons of genius. But we may be said to know more than this. We can discern the *causes*. When the professor shall be able, consistently with his understanding of the Bible, to tell others that religion contains no ceremonial act, no necessary relation to time, place, or mode; that it is thoroughly spiritual; that its design has been misunderstood; that this has arisen from the fact that its statements have been read in an isolated way, in place of having been collated together; that believers are sent forth to

baptize, not with water but the Spirit; not to distribute bread and wine, but the genius and character of the Lord Jesus. When the Christian shall be able to say to his fellow, it is not true that the Bible praises imbecility and extols ignorance; on the contrary, it sets men on acquiring the loftiest wisdom, it offers them God as a father, Christ as a brother, it enjoins them to search all things, yea, the deep things of God, it commands them to do greater things than the Saviour did when he walked with men, it assigns to them the work of bringing in the glory of the latter day. All splendid predictions of coming wisdom and virtue that the Scriptures utter, are spoken of as the result of human agency. That the devil is to be expelled from the earth, that the wilderness and the solitary place are to rejoice; these and other happy events are attributed to the good conduct of believers. When such tenets shall be broadly taught, there will be reasons why men of talent should think well of religion, that have never yet existed.

It shall be a characteristic of the latter day, that religion shall be sought after **BY NUMBERS**. "Many nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." At present we have the *appearance* of numbers, and they who preside

are satisfied with the outward show. As multitudes came forward to meet John, and to partake of his material baptism, when he preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," so the sort of harbingers of a purer religion, with which we have to do at present, attract crowds. At one point the similitude fails. John was aware of the character of those who met him. He knew that the truth was not in them. He told them this. The teachers of religion, at present, have not his penetration or his candour. They receive those who are attracted by ordinances, spirit of party, and other carnal inducements, as if they were impelled by genuine motives. It is a different concourse that the spirit of all truth adverts to in the passage above quoted. To him it could not be matter of exultation that formalists repaired to protest and lie around their hypocritical leaders.

But this difference of circumstances must be occasioned by reasons. It could not spring up without them. To say that the distance between the church, as it is and as it shall be, is as great as is comprised in this fact, that the one is frequented by persons who are "sensual, having not the Spirit," and that the other shall be thronged by those who are animated by zeal and pious intelligence; to set forth this degree of unlikeness is to predict an equal change in the system. If in the moral world a people be the reflection of the opinions taught among them, then the church, as we see it, is the accurate result of its tenets. In order,

then, to have it such as it is depicted in connexion with the latter day glory, we must get thoughts which are capable of engendering it. Here there is room for enquiry. Out of the pages of that book that has been long in our hands, but which, as yet, has exerted little influence on the moral nature of man, out of this volume to draw what shall change the world to the extent predicted—there is the problem that solicits attention.

A feature often alluded to is, that the church shall be **FREE OF MIXTURE**. "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city, for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Again, "Then shall Jerusalem be holy; and there shall no strangers pass through her any more." Again, "Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein; and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." This is a clear statement. It pronounces that religion shall assume such a character, as that it shall cease to be capable of being counterfeited. What is there in our present systems that render them accessible to every spurious influence? how may such tendencies be combated? are questions that this subject suggests. That Christianity which is pervious to every emissary of Satan, and that which on revealed authority shall admit no foreign

ingredient must be philosophically different. We cannot hope to cross the space involved, our doctrines and practices continuing what they are.

It is a feature of the church triumphant that it shall exert a MEDICAL INFLUENCE on mankind. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." To state this of a given time, is significantly to intimate that until that time does arrive, religion shall not produce this particular effect. Is this owing to a change of time, or is it not rather the consequence of a change of system? If it be the same Christianity that we have at present, it would infallibly do now what it is predicted that it shall do hereafter. If it does not accomplish this, it must be susceptible of alteration in the extent that it falls short of the result. To attain a glorious consummation by means of a system that does nothing now, is an idea that could be harboured only by such beings as those who at present disgrace religion. To any but such it would occur as a self-evident truth, that the Christianity which we have *does as much as it can*, and that where we read of a great deal more being effected, we are bound to believe that the agency was proportionally altered.

It is a feature of the latter day religion, that men shall HAVE KNOWLEDGE. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto

the greatest of them, saith the Lord." After eighteen centuries and a half of preaching, nominal Christendom means a fifth of the globe, and in that fifth it would be too much to say that one in a thousand has correct ideas in regard to the plan of salvation. From this point we are to move forward to the high estate intimated in the verse above quoted. The ability to perform this transit must proceed from something. As things are now, we have neither knowledge nor the means of coming at it. Inasmuch as we do not even allow that our situation is what we have described it, the progress contemplated must imply that the church shall be revealed to itself. We have to emerge from the state in which we are plunged in ignorance, torn by schism, polluted by hypocrisy, and insane upon system; from this condition, we have to travel onward to that other state when all shall know. To compass an end so different from any that Christianity has hitherto led on to, we want a system of assignable properties. What has not moved men will not move them. What they have counterfeited before they will counterfeit again. What has consigned them over to ignorance in all time past, will continue to do so in all time to come. When Moses found that the magicians imitated his miracles, he did not do the same thing over again, but went on to another. He overcame them by going on to what they could not achieve. The church will conduct men on to the state of knowledge referred to, not

by revolving round its present ideas, but by singing a new song. It has yet to learn that society in any place or time is the product of the views professed by it.

If, in reply to this, it should be argued that the principles entertained at present are good and scriptural, we, in turn, put the question, Are they *all* good? May it not be said of the best systems that obtain, that they are petty as regards their absolute size, that they contain false doctrines and contradictory opinions, that they abjure method, that their proof is quite inadequate, and that any good that there is in their doctrinal statements is neutralized by their ceremonies? When we say, then, that the bad state of mankind is owing to their theology, it is not necessary that we should be understood as objecting to every article of their *written* creed. What is in their books may not be in their minds,—may not be in their life. That the written creed contains some statements that will endure for ever, is not a reply to our objection, provided it could be shown that the action of these is hindered by the influence of the other parts. When we read then that much knowledge shall characterize the church of the latter day, we refuse to believe that the result is to be attained by means of principles that impart little knowledge. We insist on maintaining that the end can be reached on no other condition than this, that we greatly change our means.

The prophets largely insist on **PEACE**, as a fea-

ture of the church triumphant. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Again, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; *for* the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This is a large feature. Rightly understood, it means that the spirit of faction that divides men into sects and parties, shall pass away. Hitherto, theology has been remarkable for nothing so much as the rancour that it has called into play. But if knowledge is to abound, and yet harmony to prevail, elements must come into operation that we have not been accustomed to see. As we are at present, were our faculties and information to be suddenly augmented, the principles of discord would, in all probability, be increased. When men of ability come into contact at present, it is more frequent that they enter on a course of rivalry, than that, forgetting all selfish-

ness, they bestow their powers for the promotion of truth and virtue. Intelligence, in the mean time, is as often a firebrand as it is a salubrious influence. In order that much knowledge should co-exist with great peace, it would be requisite that human beings should be actuated by a desire for the glory of God. That this is not the case now, is obvious from the circumstance, that all persons, saints and sinners, use their talents in such a way as to get all for them that they possibly can obtain. Such being the tendency, to add to ability would be to increase the selfishness and disunion.

If then we are told of the latter day that knowledge shall be much more general, and yet that the most wonderful peace shall exist along with it, we may feel sure that new moral qualities also have entered into the composition of society. But we ought never to allow ourselves to contemplate such a prospect as that of which we speak, without speculating in regard to the means of reaching it. Unless our thoughts take this practical shape, the view does us harm. With our present acquaintance with the Christian religion, we can readily foresee how its principles should lead on to this result. It is the marriage of God to man. It pours the Divine nature into human vessels. It asks that we should love the Lord our God with our whole heart and strength and mind. It stipulates that unless we can leave all things to follow

Christ, we cannot be a fit disciple. It lays down the principle, that if the eye be single the whole body shall be filled with light. It provides that the co-operation and sympathy among the followers of the Redeemer should be as thorough as that which we see obtaining among the members of an organized body. If these doctrines are capable of effecting the end which we contemplate, we know how it may be accomplished with that very Christianity that has been so long promulgated. And if these doctrines have been so little carried out that we cannot name one person who, since the death of Christ, has exemplified them in any very high degree, then we have not far to go in search of an explanation why it is that knowledge and harmony have not co-existed hitherto.

We have descriptions of the latter day which connect it with much **ABUNDANCE**, in the way of heavenly blessings. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Again, "It shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk." We have heard such passages used on what are called "sacramental occasions," at which times it is intimated that the extraordinary blessedness shadowed forth in these descriptions is realized by that half of the parish or congregation that partakes of the bread and

wine. We have seen nothing in the churches that at all deserved these metaphors. What we *have* witnessed has corresponded with that which the prophet saw in the valley of dry bones. In the profession, without religion, that we have descried on all sides, we have perceived the truth of the statement, that the dry bones are the whole house of Israel. Yet, in order to realize this abundance, it is not necessary to our theory to imagine a new revelation. If, without a method of interpreting Scripture, Christianity has been able to exert the considerable influence that can fairly be attributed to it, what may we not look for from it when it shall have become a science that deals with revelation, on the notion that it is as orderly, and far grander than that planetary system which is but its algebraic sign, its material exponent. If, when we have been treating it as if it were the production of Moses, Daniel, or Peter, it has ruled the morality of men, it will do much greater things when its several parts are represented as various voices emanating from the one and eternal Spirit. If, while its expounders have described it as the enemy of science, and peculiarly meant for babes and simpletons, it has yet in a great degree regulated the views of mankind, how vast will be its sway when it shall be held up as the receptacle of all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge? If when not a hundredth part of its contents has been rightly understood it has received some rev-

erence, what influence shall it not exercise when the whole symmetrical plan shall be understood and admired. If, while in the vile society of ordinances and will worship, it has actuated human sentiment, shall it not utter a commanding voice when freed from all such associates? If, during the period that prophecy foretells that Satan shall exert a terrible pestilential and all-pervading influence over Christendom, religion has at least this quality about it, that it civilizes and enlightens, there are no limits to what may be anticipated when the set time to favour Zion comes round and when Messiah is established on the throne of his glory.

Ideas of this sort are contained in the following Scripture: "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" Nothing more contemptuous can be said of any branch than this, that it has not yet been subjected to any regular examination,—has not become a science. If the gospel of Jesus, in such an infantine condition, has not expired before the fierce and repeated attacks to which it has been subjected, what may we not reasonably look for from it when fulfilling the predictions of a thousand prophecies, it comes forth the wondrous opposite of almost all that it has hitherto appeared. When we read the account of strange copiousness that shall characterize the latter day, we feel that

there are ample agencies to realize the whole, because all that we require in order to this, is simply to estimate in our minds the petty tracts of Scripture that yield any food, as compared with the vast tracts that are still fallow ground.

A characteristic of the church triumphant is the change that is produced in THE ASPECT OF THE EARTH. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God." And again, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes." A change of this sort on external nature would infer the presence of strong agency. But this being an illustration, of course not exaggerated, of the effect that takes place in the moral universe, we are bound to suppose that the causation there, shall be as great as the metaphor could possibly warrant. That which is passive now, which delights

to look back and show that it has not varied for centuries, which finds sanctity in rejecting the idea that it can do anything but preach and sigh, becomes invested with the powers implied in these descriptions.

To him who would wish to be an engineer in divine things—and where is he that ought not to entertain such a desire—to him it should be the most urgent and exciting of all enquiries, to ascertain what are the forces concerned in effecting such results. Our vague sentimental churchmen would be content, perhaps, to say that much prayer will be requisite. More exact minds would ask for something less indefinite. Prayer is not an *ultimate* method. It should be followed by something. It ought to bring means into being. While it is admitted that prayer should be unceasing, we ask that it should come out in the specific shape of new knowledge and power of doing. That I should be able to reconcile parts of the Word that at present stand out from each other; that I should understand how to extract sense from great tracts that yield no meaning; that I should be in the way of verifying its own theory, that all Scripture is profitable; that this increase of knowledge should show itself in the shape of improved modes of action, are stipulations requisite to the end contemplated. They cannot be realized without prayer. On the other hand, the majority of minds are unpractical enough to

make much and continued supplication, without looking that a tangible result accrues from their prayers. He who allows his mind to go out in contemplation of the landscape depicted in these passages, should bind himself over to consider what means may be employed to turn the speculative into the real, the future into the present.

We proceed to enumerate more rapidly some of the other features predicted of that day. Joshua, the representative of the church, having before been clothed in filthy garments, shall have clean attire given to him. The children of Israel who shall have continued many days "without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim," they shall "return, and seek the Lord their God; and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." The heritage of God shall dwell in a strong city, to which salvation shall be appointed for walls and bulwarks. At this—the consummation of sacred architecture—the cope-stone shall be laid on with shoutings. That day shall be a season of extraordinary darkness and terror to the enemies of the truth. They who have not feared before shall be panic-struck. Then shall be accomplished the doom long decreed against Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and his river. Then shall be verified the terrible prediction that declares the downfall of the king of Babylon, who, under the

designation of Lucifer, son of the morning, is seen to go down into the pit, to the wonder of the other kings and influences that have preceded him in ruin. Then shall the lamentation upon the king of Tyrus be fulfilled, even that power who is described as sealing up the sum full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty, as having been in Eden, the garden of the Lord, as making his covering of every precious stone, as walking up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Then shall be accomplished also the predictions which concern those influences, that are expressed by Moab, and Edom, and Damascus, and Ammon. The barren woman, that has long been desolate, shall then sing, for more numerous shall be her progeny than those of her that hath an husband. Jerusalem shall be filled with inhabitants. A covenant shall be made with the beasts of the earth, and with the fishes of the sea. The contest between Michael the archangel, and Satan, about the body of Moses, shall be fought, and won by the good influence. That city whose architecture John spreads out to the view in the Apocalypse shall be built in all its splendid details. That garden with the tree in it, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, shall be exhibited to view. The prediction that makes mention of a fountain that shall issue from under the threshold of the house of the Lord, shall be verified.

Many circumstances that we are aware of, but

that we have not specified, will be brought about. Of course it will also happen that events which we cannot anticipate will take place. Where we are in the position of looking out upon a scene stupendous in its dimensions, and composed of details, all or most of which are different from our present circumstances, it is very supposable that much will escape the eye. Vast tracts of Scripture are obviously devoted to the delineation of the coming glory. So much is there relating to it, that in no part of the sacred pages would it seem as if there were so much tautology. Where the particulars are so very numerous, and where they concern matters unlike any that the human race has ever witnessed, it is a most natural idea to believe that we can at present apprehend but a part.

By the birth of Isaac out of the course of nature ; by the entering into Canaan, after many years consumed in wandering in a wilderness ; by the restoration of the tribes from captivity in Babylon ; by the resurrection of Jesus Christ ; by the predictions of the Saviour ; by the events that happen under the seventh trumpet ; by the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, mentioned by Peter, and by predictions in all the prophets, far too numerous to specify,—on these grounds are we entitled to look forward to a triumphant state of religion on the earth. By the fact that five out of seven days

elapse before man is made, that the rules of nature are violated before Isaac is born, that the peaceful estate of Israel comes at the end of its history, that the second advent of our Lord occurs, according to his own prophecy, only after a long time, has been marked by wars, treasons, pestilences, famines, false Christs; by the token that Jesus declares that the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me; that Paul asserts that that day shall not come except there be a falling away first; by the man of sin, whom he depicts; by the perilous times, that he elsewhere foretells; by the rich men of James, the false teachers of Peter, the antichrist of John, the clouds without water of Jude; by the seven churches and the seven seals; by the slaying of the witnesses, the flight of the woman into the wilderness, the dominion of the beast for forty and two months; by the whore that sits on many waters; by the battle of Armageddon, or mountain of the gospel, wherein Michael and his angels fight with the devil and his angels; by great Babylon, whose character and overthrow fill so much space,—by all these tokens we conclude that the glorious consummation shall not be reached until the church shall have passed through every one of the stages intended in these symbols.

When, then, the mutiny of unbelief, rising up within us, would lead us to act in the manner foretold by Peter, and to say, "Where is the pro-

mise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," we are supplied with ample arguments wherewith to answer the objection. To such cavils we may reply that half of Scripture is pointed against them,—that it contains but two themes, "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow," and that therefore the low condition of religion, which staggers us, is the first of these states, and should satisfy us that the second will come about at the right time.

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